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SCS #1265-

Thomas F. Torrance

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Pious and Elaborate
T R E A T I S E
C O N C E R N I N G
P R A Y E R ;
A N D T H E
answer of P R A Y E R.

Written by

That Learned and Eminent Servant of
CHRIST, Mr. *John Brown*, sometime
Minister of the Gospel at *Wamphray*.

And now published by well-wishers to the interest
of C H R I S T.

Luke. 18, 1. --- *Men ought always to Pray and not
to faint.*

1 Thess. 5, 17. *Pray without ceasing.*

1 John. 5, 14. --- *If ye ask any thing according to
his Will, he heareth us.*

Eph. 6, 18 *Praying always with all prayer and Sup-
plication in the Spirit. &c.*

G L A S G O W.

Printed by *John Robertson* and Mrs *M^r Lean* Book-
sellers in the middle of the Salt-mercato. 1745.



Publishers to Reader.

Christian Reader

HERE is presented to thy view tho' a posthumous yet genuine piece of that great and gracious Mr John Brown's labours: In whom there was (as the reverend and pious Mr Robert M^r ward, his brother and companion in tribulation, writes in his preface, to the authors second part, Or the blessed faith) such a blessed conjunction of rare gifts, with such a rich and plentiful measure of grace; that his praise was deservedly so much in the church of Christ. That his works needed no man's Elogium, or commendatory epistle, to set them off: For the authors eminency in grace and learning, vastness and pregnancy of parts, fervour of Zeal, according to knowledge, indefatigable diligence in the work of the Lord, an holy heroick disregard of men, & their estimation, in approving himself to God, by a ready and resolute withstanding the corruptions of his time, and opposing all the courses and contrivances, and unworthy connivings, whereby the cause of Christ had been wronged and basely abandoned, and the free course of the gospel obstructed; by single sollicitousness, and strenuous endeavours, to have pure ordinances preserved in his generation, and propagate to the posterity: In a word, his faithfulness, as a servant, in all the house and matters of God, and loyalty to his Lord and Master Jesus Christ whose royal prerogatives, the priviledges of whole kingdom, and establishment of whose throne, were more prized by him, more precious and dear to him, than all other intrests whatsoever; did sufficiently commend his labours to all that fear God, and savour the things of Christ.

It may be an appreciating, and endearing consideration to thee, that this treatise, is not only the work of such a worthy work man, such a wrestler with God, such a witness for, his master, and such a beloved A 2

Disciple ; But is among his last works ; which he wrote at the close of a long walk with God ; and in exile, while he was in Holland about twenty years, from his Banishment (Anno 1661.) until he ended his days, and entered into the joy of his LORD.

That it is truly a part, and tho' the last made public, yet, not the least part of the excellent and useful writings of that great and gracious man, will be evident, upon perusal, to any, who is acquaint with the stile, method, and peculiar manner of his writings, Or, who knows his hand (and cyphered subscription) manifest in the original manuscript, still preserved for satisfying any, who question the verity, or suspect the vitiating thereof : it was not only written, but revised corrected, entituled and prepared for the printing, all with his own hand ; as is plain by comparing the autograph, with the large and elegant manuscript, Latine History of the Church of Scotland, all done with his own hand. Which excellent history (of the same theme, scope and method, with his apologetical relation) was by that assembly, which received it from the Trustee, whom the author a little before his death, had charged with it, to be left at the disposal of the first free general assembly, that should be in Scotland ; reposed in the library of the college of Edinburgh : So the churches abroad have received no information thereby, as the painful writter intended, nor many at home. Moreover the gentleman, now a minister, who procured this practical treatise of prayer, in Holland, and brought it home, can attest that it is genuine : and tho' many (pieces on the subject be come abroad before this, yet the intelligent Reader may find it inferior to none, and in some respects, preferable to any of them. That it may promote God's glory, and, by his blessing, thy soul's good, be an help and encouragement to, and in the way of thy duty ; especially in that very necessary and profitable, tho' much neglected duty of prayer, as it is evidently the design of the work, and scope of the Author : So is the main design, and hearty desire of the publishers. Farewell.

O F

P R A Y E R

A N D T H E

A N S V V E R of P R A Y E R.

F R O M

John. 14; 13 : *And whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son: Ver 14 : If ye shall ask anything in my Name I will do it:*

C H A P. I

*The Words and their Connection with what prece-
eth cleared.*

OUr Lord JESUS CHRIST being about to comfort his disciples, who were much cast down and discouraged with the sad tidings of his departure from them, told them several things, in the beginning of this *Chapter*, tending to encourage them; & at length, upon Occasion of their questions, he came to clear up, and to insist upon, a very comfortable and fundamental point of truth, *to wit*, That *He was in the Father, and the Father in him*; thereby pointing forth his being One with the Father, as in Essence, so in Operations, and that the whole work of salvation was carried on with a wonderful harmony, agreement and unanimity, betwixt the Father and Him; and so, that though as to his humane nature, he was to be taken from them, yet he was the true

6 *The Text and Context cleared.* CHAP. I.
and living GOD, and as God would be always with them, : And that, as he had given frequent proof hereof, in his many and great miracles, and wonderful works, that he did, *to wit*, That he was God & in the Father, and the Father in Him, or that the work he was about was God's ; so, for a further confirmation hereof, and for their further encouragement, he tells them, *Ver. 12.* That they and others that would believe in Him, should be endued with power, to do such works and miracles, as he himself did, yea, and in some sense greater, and that because of his going to, and being glorified with the Father, as the great LORD REDEEMER, that had finished the work of redemption, that the Father had given him to do.

Now for further clearing and confirming of these particulars, he addeth these words, *Verse. 13, 14.* *And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.* The words having no remarkable difficulty in them, we need not herein insist on the explication of them ; and what shall be necessary shall be done, as we go along.

We shall therefore here only take notice of the cohesion of these words with Christ's preceeding Discourse, and in order to this remark these three things.

First, consider them, as connected with, and as a confirmation of that which he had last been speaking of, concerning the power, that such as should believe in him should be endued with, to work miracles ; & so the words have this sense, That whatever they should desire to be done by them, for the confirmation of the truth, which they were to preach and hold forth, and for the confirmation of their commission & authority to preach that doctrine, they had no more to do, in order thereunto, but to send up a suite unto the Father, in the Name of Christ, and it should be granted ; yea, Christ himself, when exalted, should do it, by his power and spirit.

Next

Next, considering them, as related to what he was speaking of his being One with the Father; they will contribute to prove him to be GOD equal with the Father, and in the work of redemption he was about perfectly one with the Father; so that all was carried on with oneness of mind, will and design. For 1st, When he was to be taken from them, and translated in to glory; yet even then and there, he he would hear and know all their supplications and requests. 2^{dly}. They needed no question, nor doubt of a good and speedy Return, seeing he was there. Yea, 3^{dly}. He himself having all power in heaven & earth granted unto Him, as mediator in order to the carrying on of that one work and design, with the Father, would work out the answer unto their prayers himself; yea, and do what they desired, as being intrusted with all of the Father. 4^{thly}, And all this must be so, because it, will be to the glory of the Father, as concurring and consenting, or working the same in and by him; whereby it is manifest, That He and the Father are One, as in essence, so in this work of mediation.

Thirdly, Considering them as related to the scope and design of Christ here, which is to cheer up and comfort the hearts of his disciples, now sorrowful because of the news of his departure, they will hold forth a ground of comfort upon this account, that hereby he declareth, That howbeit, as to his bodily presence, he should be withdrawn from them; yet notwithstanding thereof there would be constant intercourse betwixt them; they would be sending up their suits to His name, and he would be sending down returns of their prayers: so that they would get all their desires answered, as well as when he was with them, in his bodily presence.

We shall shortly dispatch what may be taken notice of and observed from the words, as they ly under this three-fold relation. And as to the *first* relation, or connection, we may observe,

That all the great works and miracles which the apostles, and others with, and after them, in the primitive church, did for confirmation of the doctrine of Christ as truly divine, and as owned of God, were not done by these instruments; but principally by Christ Jesus himself, by his power and spirit, what they asked of that kind, he would do it, even he himself. The Apostles *Peter* and *John* did solemnly declare, this when they had cured a man lame from his mother's womb, *Act*, 3. 12. *Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us as though by our own power, or holiness, we had made this man to walk.* Thus they renounced all interest, that men would be ready to acknowledge as their due; and on the contrary, they ascribed all unto Christ, saying, *And his (i. e. Christ's) name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him, hath given him this perfect soundness, in the presence of you all: Yea, when the miracle was about to be done, Peter said, Verse. 6. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.*

Whence we should learn 1st. How to look on those miracles wrought by the apostles, even as demonstrations of the divine power and authority of Christ, who wrought all these in and by those fecklets men; and as divine testimonies given unto the truth of the doctrine of the gospel, which they preached in commission from Christ; and thereupon be induced to comply with, and embrace that truth, so attested, and solemnly confirmed from heaven; knowing what the Apostle saith, *Heb*, 2. 3, 4. *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us, by them that heard him: God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with diverse miracles, and gifts of the holy ghost, according to his own will.*

2 Whether in reference to these works and miracles
or

or in reference to other more ordinary works, done since that dispensation of miracles is ceased, by instruments, whom the Lord thinketh good to raise up, and make use of for that end, we would learn to eye the principal more than the instrument; for we are ready to dote upon instruments, and look upon them, as if they by their might and power did do these things; and this appeareth by, *1st.* Our too much crying of them up, and commending of them: It is true, we should honour such as the Lord is pleased to honour; but we readily transcend due bounds; and cry them up too much, as if none else were to be eyed beside them. *2dly.* Our trusting too much to them, and to deifying of them, and expecting too much from them; as if they and they only were to do all; whence it cometh to pass, That when these instruments are out of sight, or taken away, we are cast down, as if there were no more hope; and as if they had been something more than instruments; or as if the residue of the spirits were not with the Lord, and he could not raise up others, and had been principal worker of all himself. This evil I say, should be guarded against; let instruments have place and due, but no more; let Christ have his due, and the glory of all. And this will appear by these evidences, *1st.* When we keep the throne for Christ and give him the glory of all that is done, that is due to him, then what ever we see done by instruments, will be so far from taking our eye off Christ, that on the contrary, it will lead us up more directly unto Him and bring Christ more near to our view; and there our eye will be fixed: We will then say, This is the hand of the Lord, this is the work of the Lord, *2dly.* We will be taught thereby to fix our faith and dependence more upon him: For we will say, This and this hath the Lord done, who would not rest upon him? who would not trust him? who can doubt of his power and might? We would be stirred up thereby to express our sense and thankfulness, up
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on the account of these great works of his, 4thly. If at any time, we were disappointed of our expectations, then we would be in an adoring frame, stooping before the Lord, lying in silence, and observing his hand, working or not working, as he seeth good.

3. In reference to our own work of righteousness and obedience, we would hence learn to do them in him; or to have him working them in us: for it is God, that worketh in us, both to will and to do *Phil*, 2, 13. *It is God that worketh all and in all* even as to common operations of gifts, *1. Cor.* 12, 6, 11. *It is his power that worketh in us*, *Ephes*, 3, 20. *And he wrought in Paul mightily.* *Col*, 2, 29. *He wrought effectually in Peter and Paul*, *Gal.* 1, 8. *He worketh in us what is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.* *Heb*, 13, 21. Seeing then that it is he, who thus worketh his works in us, let us put the work in his hands, depend upon him therefore, acknowledge him in all, and give him the glory of all; and beware of sacrificing to our own net, or of burning incense to our own drag, upon this account.

Next we may hence observe, That Christ would here have the apostles making use of prayer, in order to their working instrumentally of miracles: And accordingly we find they did so, *Acts*, 4, 24 to 30. And this was for noble ends, 1st. To keep them humble, in the sense of their own inability, and insufficiency for these great things which they were to be employed in. 2dly, . to teach them pure & single dependence upon Him, who was to work all these works in them, and by them. 3dly. To teach them to ascribe all the glory unto him, unto whom alone it was due.

For our use, we may here take notice of these two things.

1. We may see and observe, what a sweet subordination and harmony there is betwixt God's promises and Purposes, to work his great works; and our prayers in reference thereunto. Our Praying, for
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and obtaining of a blessing by Prayer, should not cause us think, That God had no purpose or resolution to do that before our Prayer; for his purposes are all everlasting, and our Prayers can make no change in him, or in his resolutions, or occasion any new purposes, and intentions in him. And again, his promises or purposes should not shut out, or render our Prayers useless. These harmoniously agree, and are to be so looked upon by us. After many promises made unto the church of the *Jews*, in the latter days, this is subjoined, Ezek. 36. 37. *Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.*

2. We may here mark the wonderful goodness and condescension of God, that will have us pray for that which he minded to give, and work himself: For thus, he 1st. Reneweth and confirmeth the proof of his faithfulness. 2^{dly}. He maketh the mercy a double mercy, by giving of it freely, and by giving of it in such a way, as it were upon our Prayers and Desires. 3^{dly}. He thus allureth and engageth poor sinners, to have fellowship and correspondence with him by Prayer. 4^{thly}. He hereby maketh the mercy more sweet and desirable to us, and more welcome when it cometh, when he hath made us pray, and wrestle for it in Prayer. 5^{thly}. He hereby keepeth us in the fresh sense of our unworthiness. 6^{thly}. He hereby engageth us more to see and acknowledge the true fountain and spring, or, well-head of all those mercies and favours, *to wit*, The free Grace and Love of God. 7^{thly}. He hereby layeth obligations upon us to be more thankful for, and sensible of his free and undeserved kindnesses.

As to the *Second* Relation that these words have, *to wit*, As a further proof and confirmation of the Lord Mediator's being one in Essence and Operation with the Father, it giveth ground to observe these three things.

1. That Christ's answering all the lawful and necessary

cessary desires and petitions of his people, is a demonstration and confirmation of his being one with the father, both as to Essence and Operation, and especially in the work of redemption.

2. That Christ's hearing and answering all our Supplications should assure us of this fundamental truth, That he is God equal with the Father, and that he and the Father are one, as to the carrying on of the wonderful Work of Redemption.

3. That we cannot rightly direct our Prayers to Christ, or, to God thro' Christ, and expect his effectual granting and working the answer, unless we be fixed in the Faith of this, That he and the father are one.

All these three ly wrapped up in the connection of the words with what went before; And they say to us,

1. That in order to our right approaching to God in Prayer, we should labour to be rooted in the faith of this, That our Lord Jesus is one with the Father in Essence and Operation: That he is in the Father, and the Father in him; That as to the work of redemption, they are perfectly one: Because 1st. We may hereby be confirmed in our hope of being heard by Christ, when we present our supplications; he being God, we need not question his being acquainted with all our necessities, and his hearing of the very inward desires of our Soul. 2^{dly}. We may hereby be encouraged to go with confidence to the father thro' him; for he and the father being one, we need not question his moyen and power with the father, what he willeth, the father willeth also. 3^{dly}, We may hereby be ascertained, That our Prayers put up to the father thro' Christ shall be accepted. And 4^{thly}. We may rest confident, that the answer and return of our Prayers shall be solid, real, safe and seasonable; for he being God, and our Saviour, and Redeemer, will unquestionably perform the desires he hath framed in us by his Spirit, and who can hinder him from working

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ing who is God, and what can stand in the way of his carrying on and perfecting that work, wherein he and the father are one?

2. That every return and answer of our Prayers should confirm us in the faith of this, That our Lord Jesus, and the Father are one in Essence and Operation, and that the work of redemption is carried on by both, in a wonderful oneness of mind.

3. That the advantages of believers are great, who put up their supplications to God, thro' God, and have their returns from God, thro' God, and that all their answers are confirmations of the Mediator's being God, and one with the Father, both as to Essence, and as to the work of redemption.

4. That the Consideration hereof should wonderfully work upon us, to fall in love with, and to delight in the noble exercise of Prayer.

As to the *third* Relation of these words, that is, The respect they have unto the main-scope and design of our Lord Jesus, *to wit*, To comfort his sorrowful hearted disciples, now troubled at the report of his going away from them, as to his bodily presence: We may hence observe these four things.

1. That Christ's bodily absence needs not hinder our Prayers: Yea,

2. Christ's being now in glory, and exalted as mediator should be a strong encouragement and enduement to this duty of Prayer, seeing he will not suffer our Prayers to miscarry, and he is in case to give an effectual return.

3. Christ even while out of the sight of his people, can and will procure their good as effectually, as if he were present with them: No change of that kind altering his affection, or rendering him more unable.

4. Christ's care of the Prayers of his people, while he is now absent, as to his bodily presence, should make them digest well, & to be satisfied with his bodily absence: And the faith of this will prove a cordial, to strengthen against the thoughts of that, which

14 *The Text and Context cleared.* Chap. I.
may otherwise prove an heart-sadning and fainting
consideration.

Whence we see, 1st. The happy condition of believers, to whom all-things work together for good, and to whom Christ maketh the saddest condition advantageous. Even Christ's bodily absence, can be made up with advantage unto them. O how are they up-made, who have a true interest in, and such a sure relation unto such a Lord, head and husband, as can and will carry on their profit and advantage, even by such dispensations, as do (in their apprehensions) threaten no less, than their utter undoing! what could be more sadning unto the poor hear-broken Disciples, than the withdrawing and bodily absence of Christ? And what should they do now (might they think) with their desires and petitions, when their Master, who was careful to answer and satisfy them in all their demands, is now removed from them? But Christ tells them that his bodily absence should not prove prejudicial to them, as to that; for he would be as tender and careful of them, as ever; and would not fail to answer all their desires.

2. That believers should be far from questioning the love, tenderness and kindness of Christ, even when he is withdrawn, and hideth himself, or when he is at a distance from them, in their apprehensions. Christ would have the Disciples resting assured, that even when he was to be taken from them, and they were to enjoy his bodily presence no more, his affections would remain warm towards them, he would be as careful and tender of them in all their necessities as ever, and as observant of their desires, in all points, as ever; whatever they should ask, or desire, he would do it for them.

3. While Christ is now in Glory, at the Father's right hand, as the accepted and exalted Mediator, Believers should be diligent in posting away their desires, and improve with earnestness, that rich advantage which now they have by Christ's being there; and

and thereby give Proof of their drawing encouragement therefrom. Christ is now high at court (should believers say) therefore let us ply our Time, and hatten-up all our desires, and make known all our wants and necessities; seeing we may be sure, they will find acceptance there, and we will not want a quick dispatch, and satisfying returns.

4. Believers should not be unbelievably troubled, or too much discouraged and cast down, at Christ's necessary withdrawals; nor particularly infer therefrom, that their Prayers shall be the less regarded: For as he can make up that seeming loss with real advantage; so their Prayers and desires may succeed with better advantage thereby.

5. Believers should improve all the sweet and satisfying returns of Prayer which they obtain, unto this end and advantage, among others, to confirm them in the Faith of this, That the Lord Jesus is God, equal in Power and Glory with the Father; and that now he is one with the Father, as to the work of redemption, and is accepted of the Father, and set down as High-priest, on the right Hand of the Throne of the Majesty, in the Heavens, *Heb. 8. 1.*

6. This should be an encouragement to Strangers, to acquaint themselves with this Lord Redeemer, who is one with the Father, if they desire ever to have it going well with them, here or hereafter, and have their necessary wants supplied.

Having thus quickly dispatched these things observable, in the connection of these words with the foregoing Discourse, we shall now come to a more particular search of what lyeth in the words themselves, which we see are conceived in general terms, and so, not to be restricted alone to their seeking of such helps and assistances for working of Miracles, as might serve to confirm their Commission, and the divine truth of their Doctrine, which they were to get a more full and ample Commission to deliver, after Christ's resurrection and ascension. Nor are we to look on these words

words, as concerning only these Disciples of Christ; but as of concernment unto all the followers of Christ, unto the end of the world, tho' as to some things (as we hinted above) peculiar to the primitive dispensation of the Gospel, in a special manner, they relate to these and other extraordinary Officers; for not only are the grounds foregoing, but all also that follow, are of an universally useful nature, thro' all the ages of the Church, and to all the followers of Christ; as is plain and obvious.

The words thus considered contain these particulars, (the Subject of our following discourse)

1. There is the duty of Prayer mentioned in the Word *asking*.

2. The Person unto whom Prayer is to be addressed, which is presupposed, and to be gathered from the foregoing and following Discourse, viz. *The Father*, or God, and Christ himself.

3. The Person thro' whom these Prayers are to be presented; or, The manner of the performance of this duty, in these words, *in my Name*.

4. There is the Matter of this Prayer, and that is very large, *whatsoever ye shall ask*.

5. There is the Return, or Answer of this Prayer, in these words, *I will do it*.

6. There is the End of this Return, in these Words *That the Father may be glorified in the Son*.

7. And lastly, There is the doubling or repetition of this Return, Verse 14. *If ye shall ask any thing in my Name, I will do it*.

CHAP. II.

Of the Prerequisites to the Duty of Prayer.

WE come to speak something, in the first place. *Of the duty of Prayer*, whereunto we have Ground here in the Words; for when Christ tells them

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them, *That whatsoever they shall ask in his Name, he will do it*; he presupposeth such an exercise as *asking*, whereunto he encourageth them by annexing this Promise. Whence we have occasion to speak a word to these three things.

1. What the Work and Exercise of *Prayer*, or *asking* is.

2. That *asking* or *praying* is the necessary and unquestionable duty of the children of God; for it is here presupposed as such.

3. That nevertheless People stand in need of encouragements and excitements thereunto: For, as in reference to the main thing, our Lord is here driving at, by this whole complex encouragement; these words contain an encouragement; so there is a tacite encouragement unto the duty of Prayer it self, in this saying, *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, I will do it.*

In order to the clearing up of the first of these, we have two things to take notice of, *First*, What this duty and exercise of *asking*, or *praying* importeth, or presupposeth. *Next*, What is the proper nature and essence thereof.

As to that which *Prayer*, or this duty of *asking* importeth, or presupposeth, it will be necessary that we speak to it in the first place, that thereby way may be made unto what is further to be spoken of this duty, for this is the ground thereof, and a proper native excitement thereunto.

This asking then doth presuppose, something on the *Lord's Part*, and something on *our Part*. On the *Lord's Part*, it presupposeth three things.

1. That God, to whom Prayer is to be made, and of whom we are to ask, is al sufficient, having in him all fullness, wherewith to supply all our wants and necessities, and to answer all our askings: Of whom we ask any thing, we suppose him able to bestow that upon us, or to satisfie us as to what we ask, otherwise we could not act rationally, in troubling him with our

suits and desires ; no man will seek the supply of a considerable sum of money from one, whom he knoweth to be a mere beggar ; nor will seek help of one, who cannot help. Now the Lord, unto whom we are to address our selves in Prayer is God al sufficient, an inexhaustible fountain of all good, only able to supply all our wants, according to his riches in glory, Phil. 4. 19. *And to make all grace to abound towards us, that we always having al sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work,* 2 Cor. 9, 8.

2. That God is ready and willing to communicate of that good, whereof he is the inexhaustible fountain; men seek not, where they know they will not be the better, ask as they will, when then men are called to ask, and seek of the Lord what they want, it is presupposed, That God will give ; he is liberal and a richly bountiful benefactor : *He is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil,* Luke 6. 35. *He maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust,* Matth. 5. 45. *The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord,* Psal. 33. 5. *Yea, How great is his goodness!* Zech. 9. 17. *There is a riches of his goodness,* Rom. 2. 4.

3. That God hath appointed Prayer and asking, as the way for us to receive of his goodness and bounty : It is true, he giveth freely our being, and many favours e're we can be in any capacity to seek, and many mercies and blessings doth he bestow upon the wicked, who are so great enemies to their own happiness and welfare, that they will not seek of him what they stand in need of : Yet it is a statute of nature, that as we depend upon the Lord, the fountain of our being, for our being, and for all things that can contribute to our subsisting and well-being, so we must testifie and declare our dependence upon him, for all these things, by asking them of him.

On our part it presuppoeth, and importeth these things.

1. That we are poor indigent souls, standing in need

need of many things, both for soul and body : We are full of imperfections, defects, and miseries ; obnoxious to many and various changes, calamities, crosses, accidents, temptations, oppositions, assaults, overmasterings of corruptions, satan and the world, and other things of that nature : For he who wanteth seeketh, (as we say.)

2. That we cannot help our selves, or remedy these evils ; we cannot prevent them, nor withstand them, nor repel them, of our selves, we cannot perform the duties required, having no sufficiency thereunto ; *For we are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing, as of our selves,* 2 Cor. 3. 5. So that to help our selves in all, or in any of these wants, necessities, and distresses, is not in our power, otherwise we would not go to another to seek for necessary supplies.

3. That we should be well acquainted with our own case, and know our wants and necessities (spiritual, as well as temporal : How else can we ask for that, which is suitable unto our case ? When we know not our necessities, we cannot tell what we would have, and when we cannot tell what we would have, or would do us good, we cannot seek suitable supplies, and help to our necessities.

4. That not only we should know, what our wants and necessities are, but also we should know how great they are ; we should be touched and affected with, and really sensible of our wants, that our hearts being suitably moved thereat, we may ask and pray the more earnestly, and heartily ; for if our wants go not in, and prick not our hearts, and if they be not rightly and sensibly touched therewith, our desires and askings will be accordingly, heartless without life, edge, or seriousness, and be mere formal askings, and suits for the fashion.

5. That we ought to see our evils and wants, to be such, as can only be remedied and supplied by the Lord ; for we must be forced by inevitable necessity,

to go to him, so averse and unwilling are we, to go unto him otherways; for if we hope to be helped at another door, we will go thither, before we go to God.

From these particulars we may learn, for our use.

1. To admire this wisdom and goodness of God, who will thus have us know and experimentally feel what we are, even creatures, poor, beggarly, indigent, miserable, and helpless, as to our selves: We know not, neither do we consider, what goodness lieth wrapped up in our necessities, distresses, miseries, wants, and hardships; but are ready to complain and quarrel with the most High: We consider not, how the Lord is thereby driving us to our thrift, giving us new proofs and documents, of our being indigent creatures, and new convictions of a necessity of constant living in a dependence upon the Lord, our maker, and of hanging upon him, and waiting at his door for constant supplies of all. And O what a blessed life is this, to be under this happy necessity of depending for all our wants, less and more, upon God! what a rich trade is this, that we are made to drive with heaven; and the allsufficient and gracious heavenly benefactor, the God of the whole earth! how well might *Paul* upon this account, glory in his infirmities, seeing thereby he had so oft occasion to experience, that the power of Christ did rest upon him, 2-Cor. 12. 9. And when he found, that the strength of God was made perfect in his weakness? how should we, upon this account, be satisfied with our necessities, and infirmities, that we are driven thereby out of our selves, as convinced of nothing but poverty, emptiness and misery within us, and made to turn our course for supply heaven-ward, and to look up thither, and thence receive new and fresh supplies of all our wants, new and fresh experiences of God's goodness, kindness, tenderness, faithfulness, and allsufficient fulness; and also new confirmations of an absolute

lute necessity of placing our confidence and hope only in God, and not in our selves!

2. Hence likewise we may understand something of the cause, whence it cometh to pass, that so many, so often restrain Prayer before the Lord; and either neglect this duty altogether, or go about it in a superficial perfunctorious manner: *To wit,*

Because 1st. They are too little at home, or acquainted with themselves, with their own case and necessity; or, if they know something of it, they are not affected therewith, the sense of it reacheth not their hearts; it is but an head and speculative knowledge they have of it, no heart or practical sense, or touch thereof; they are not pinched therewith, nor pressed as convinced and sensible of ruin and utter undoing following, if they be not helped. It is the poor, who are pinched with poverty, and with the sense of want, that useth intreaties, *Prov.* 18. 23. How oft doth *David* cry out, *I am poor and needy*; and this put an edge upon his prayers. See *Psal.* 70. 5. and 86. 1.

2. They think, their maladies and distempers are such, as they know how to wrestle and throw themselves; and their own arm can bring salvation to them, out of their distresses and necessities: Their wants are not such, as they need go to heaven to get them supplied: And when they think, they can sufficiently help themselves, they will not be beholden to God for their supplies: So that little acquaintance with their own insufficiency, is another cause of the too little exercise of this duty.

3. They doubt of God's willingness to help them, and thence cometh their despondency and fainting; and when they lose hope, to come speed by the duty, they lose all heart to it; or they question his power and ability to help them, and thence infer their case desperate, and that it is in vain to call upon the Lord. The want of right apprehensions of God, as able and willing to help all poor souls that come to him, mak-

eth them ly by from coming: They hearken too much unto the devil, aggravating their Sins, and their former abuses of the Lord's loving kindness that thereby he may cause them question, if it be possible, that they can find mercy, and doubt if ever the holy and righteous Lord will own them, or look upon them again, as if the door of mercy were quite shut, and there were no more hope; and thus in despondency and despair, they lay aside this duty, as of no advantage for them.

3 Hence we may learn, with what frame of spirit, and posture of mind, we ought to approach unto the Lord in Prayer: we ought to have these Prerequisites fixed in our souls to the end we may be Put in a begging Posture, and have a Beggar's disposition and heart

1. We ought to have a deep impression of our being Creatures absolutely depending upon the Lord, as for our being, so for all that we need, for the continuation of our breath and being, and for our well being, both as to soul, and as to body: This duly fixed in our hearts, would keep us always on our Knees begging and keep us humble in the sense of his greatness, and of our nothingness: great *Abraham*, when he took upon him to speak to God, loathed on himself as dust and Ashes, *Gen.* 13. 27.

2 we ought to be particularly acquainted with our condition, that we may know, what we stand in need of, and what we are to seek: our case and condition is variable as God's dispensations vary, and Satan changeth weapons upon us, or our corruptions work and boil up, according to various occasions and temptations: our adversaries may pinch & press us diverse ways; and according to the various exigences, various and different duties may be required of us; so that Yesterday's particular supplication may not be so suteable and pertinent to day as it was Yesterday: Therefore we should be well acquainted with our present condition, and know what presently pincheth us
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most, and what particular suit we would now Pertinently put up, or what mercy or Favour our condition doth now call for ; that by this means our desires may come the more kindly from our hearts, be more earnest, and look like the present Petitions of our soul

Object. But then what shall such do, as can not understand how it is particularly with them, cannot get sight of their particular Necessities, all things ly so in confusion in their soul, that they can speak nothing distinctly of themselves ? Are not some even of the Lord's own people, oftimes in the dark ? and shall they, while wrestling with clouds of darkness, be disappointed from this duty of Prayer ? I answer, that case of darkness and confusion is a particular case that should set to Prayer and a sight of that should be so far from laying them aside from this duty, that it should press them the more thereunto: *Heman, Psal: 88. 6.* cried out of this, *thou hast led me in the lowest pit in darkness, in the deeps.* Their ignorance of their present case & necessity is, a particular that should pinch them, and press them to cry for light : who seeth and knoweth this, cannot be said to want a particular, whereupon to pray, and make a suite to God.

We should labour to get our hearts affected with these evils, to see them so, as to be pierced and pinched, and deeply affected therewith, that so our prayers and desires thereupon may become hearty and serious we should think upon our case till our heart affect our eye and when our hearts fall a bleeding, our prayers will have an edge, and a piercing force : for this end it were necessary that we considered, how desperate our case were and would be, if the suteable relief and help came not. *Object.* But what then can one do, whose complaint is this, that their hearts can be effected and pierced with no such thing, and to whom this is the saddest part of their distemper ? Have they discharge from this duty ? *Ans.* They have no discharge from this duty Yea, this very deadness and senselesness is a sad distemper and if they be sensible thereof, and affect

ed with sorrow thereat, they may and must pray for help and the more the sense of this remembrance touch them, and affect their hearts their cries for quickning will be the louder, and they will say with *David*, *Psal 119. 25. My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken thou me, according to thy word.*

4. We should labour to get such a sight of our wants, as that we may see them, beyond our own power to help, and remedie the matter, and beyond the power of all flesh; and that they are such, as God alone can satisfie; that hereby we may be brought cleanly off our selves, and made to trust no more in our selves, nor depend upon our selves; nor yet upon instruments: But that our eyes may be wholly and folly upon the Lord, and say as *Psal 121. 1, 2, (as the words may be read) Shall I lift up mine eyes to the hills? from whence shall my help come? my help is from the Lord, who made heaven & earth.* And when our eye, and hope, and confidence is only upon the Lord, our heart will be in better case to speak to him, and be more earnest with him.

5 We should labour, while addressing our selves to prayer, to have the faith of God's al sufficiency and omnipotency fixed deeply on the heart, that there may be no hinck in our heart, concerning his ability to supply and make up our wants. One would readily think, That there were no great necessity for this, seeing none are so ignorant or wicked, as to deny this: But yet the want of the rooted faith of this, causeth many pray so, as to shoot short of the mark they aim at. Satan and their own wicked hearts can, and do severall times present to the minds of some so many, so great, and so insuperable difficulties, in the way of their obtaining of what they would ask, that either they cannot ask it; or, if they do, it is not with that confidence and hope, that is requisite. And will not some be bold to say, That their iniquities are greater, than that they can be forgiven? and what is this, but to doubt of; yea, deny the infinite power of his mercy, and free grace?

6. We should labour to guard against jealousies of God, and doubting of his good will to send help, and relieve us: For this will faint our hearts, and take away all courage and hope of coming speed, in our addressies; when the Lord alloweth us to come with confidence, nothing doubting, we see what Christ says, Mark 11. 24. *Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive, and ye shall have.* And Paul willeth us, 1 Tim. 2. 8. *To pray without doubting:* So James Chap. 1. 5, 6, 7. *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth unto all men liberally and upraideth not: and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed; for let not that man think, that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.* By which we see, That if we would come aright unto this work of prayer, we should labour for large thoughts of the largeness of God's heart, of his generous willingness and readiness to answer, notwithstanding of our unworthiness, former provocations, present want of a suitable frame of spirit, misbelief, and abuse of his former mercies and favours: Only we would here remember, That what we are to pray for, be consonant to his revealed will, and that our prayers be with all due submission, as to the particular we would ask, or as to the time and season, and as to the manner of granting what we ask: for he is the holy one of Israel, who must not be limited.

C H A P. III.

Of the Nature of Prayer.

HAVING mentioned the prerequisites unto Prayer, presupposed, and intimated by the word *asking*, here used for expressing of Prayer; we come to speak a few words to clear up the nature of this exercise

ercise of Prayer ; and to this end, we need not explain the ordinary definition, or description thereof, *viz.* *That it is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, by the help of his Spirit, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies.* For many of these particulars, here mentioned, will come to be spoken to afterward.

That therefore, which we shall do here, in order to the making known, what is the nature of this work and exercise, shall be only to take notice of some of these terms, or expressions, under which it is pointed forth to us in scripture: As for example.

1. It is termed here in the text, *an asking, whatever ye shall ask.* So *Matth.* 8. 8. and 7. 7. and 21. 22. *Luke* 11. 13. *John* 15. 16. and 16. 24. *James* 1. 6. and 4. 2, 3. 1 *John* 3. 22. and 5. 14, 15. So also in the *Old Testament*, *Zech.* 10. 1. 2 *Chron.* 20. 4. *Isa.* 65. 1. And this importeth want and necessity in the seeker, and a seeking with earnest supplications, as beggars use to do, and as the same word is used, *Acts* 3. 2. Where the poor creeple is said to beg alms: So it importeth an earnest seeking, or begging with humility, as inferiors do ask any thing of their superiors, *Acts* 2, 20. And the *Hebrew* word also doth usually signifie a seeking of any thing by humble prayers, petitions and intreaties, with earnestness ; or a begging. So that hence we may learn, That Prayer is really, an earnest humble begging of God, something we want, and stand in need of ; a presenting of our humble supplications unto the Lord, for something we would fain have : It is a laying all our desires before the Lord, as *David* did *Psa.* 38. 9. And so importeth, That the praying man should be in the Beggar's posture, before the Lord, sensible of his own low condition, and of his wants and misery, and under the due awe and reverence of that God, with whom he hath to do.

2. It is termed a *Seeking*, *Matth.* 7. 7. *Seek and ye shall*

shall find. Daniel let his heart to seek by prayer and supplication, *Dan.* 9. 3. See *Amos* 5. 4, 8. *Zeph.* 2. 3. The word importeth a seeking with study and care, and vehement earnestness, as the Devil is said to seek whom he may devour, *1 Pet.* 5. 8. And as *Herod* sought the young child *Jesus*, to destroy him, *Mat.* 2. 13. And as the merchant man seeketh goodly pearls, *Matth.* 13. 45. and as the heart of him, that hath understanding, seeketh knowledge, *Prov.* 15. 14. *Job* useth it, *Chap.* 10. 6. where we have it rendered, *Thou enquirest after.* So that hence we learn, That Prayer is an enquiring, searching, seeking and hunting after something that is amissing, and which we must have: And so importeth a deep sense of the want, and a setting of soul and all awork to pursue after it, and that unceasingly, till it be found; as the man goeth after the lost sheep, till he find it; and the woman, that lighteth the candle, and sweepeth the house, and seeketh diligently till she find the lost piece of silver, *Luke* 15. 4, 8.

3. It is termed a *knocking* in that forecited place, *Matth.* 7. 7. *Knock and it shall be opened unto you;* as one standing at a door, urged with some great necessity to be in, and being very earnest, he knocketh to let them hear, who are within, that he hath something to say, and that he would be in; as it is said of the five foolish virgins, who came when it was too late, and knocked saying, *Lord, Lord open unto us,* *Luke* 13. 25. with *Matth.* 25. 11. The word is supposed to come from a word signifying an horn of a beast; and so importeth striking, or knocking with force and vehemency; as a beast doth with his horn: Which saith, That the soul is sensible of a distance, and of something standing in the way of his enjoying what he would have, and is now seeking to have that removed with earnestness, constancy and perseverance. So that now the poor soul, standing at the door of free grace, is with earnestness knocking to be let in, that free grace may shine upon it; yea, and with im-

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portunity, as the man, that came to seek of his friend, now in bed, three loaves, *Luke 11. 5, 6, 8.* When dispensations would seem to say, That when the poor soul crieth and shouteth, the Lord shutteth out his Prayer, as it is *Luke 3. 8.* And so, as it were, thrusteth him and his prayer out of doors: Yet Prayer will stand and knock at the door, and renew it's desire, and say with *David Psal. 119. 169. Let my cry come before thee.* And *Ver. 170. Let my supplications come before thee:* He would have the door set open, that his prayer may come in before the Lord, as *Heman desired Psal. 88. 2.* and that the Lord would not turn away his prayer, or as it were, thrust it out of doors: As the Lord was gracious unto *David, Psal. 66. 20.* and did not turn away his prayer, for which he blesteth him, saying, *Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.* Prayer crieth out to the Lord, as *Psal. 27. 9. Hide not thy face from me, put not thy servant away in anger.* When the Lord, by his dispensations seemeth to say, that he turneth his back upon the poor petitioner, and turneth away his face, prayer will knock again, and stand knocking, until it get access, and the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon the petitioner.

4. It is expressed by *lifting up of the soul*, *Psal. 25. 1. and 86. 4. and 143. 8.* Whereby we may understand, That our heart and soul is naturally low, and sinking towards the earth, or clogged with the cares of this world; and thereby is at a distance from God; and prayer hoisteth up the heavy and dull heart, that it may come near unto the Lord; to the end the Lord may read there, what is their condition, their wants, and their desires; whence we learn, that in right prayer the soul is lifted up, as an heave-offering, and as a sacrifice unto the Lord; and thereby consecrated and offered up unto him: As also, that when prayer is rightly gone about, the heart and soul of the man, and all his faculties are turned spiritual, and raised God-ward, lifted up above worldly cares, fears,

corruptions, and distractions: It saith the soul of man should be lifted up above doubts, tears, faintings, discouragements, that made it sink, as in deep mire before; and that the soul should now be wrought-up into a spiritual heavenly frame, and brought near God, and delivered from a carnal, natural, dead, and formal worldly frame. Whence we may also see, that the work, use, and end of prayer is to work upon the heart and soul, that what thro' inward corruption, what thro' outward temptations of Satan, and the world, is so heavy and lumpish, as a rock, that it cannot flee up God-ward, and heaven-ward, to the end, it may be brought nearer God, and may approach to him, even to his throne of grace, *Psal.* 73: 28. *Jer.* 30. 21. *Heb.* 7. 19. *Dan.* 4. 8. *Gen.* 18. 23.

5. It is expressed by *pouring out of the heart before him*, *Psal.* 62. 8. to shew that the heart is mainly to be employed in Prayer; and that in Prayer all should be laid open before God, and the heart should dissolve before him, as mettall when melted and poured forth: It also importeth the good-will cheerfulness and alacrity, that the Soul hath, or should have in this imployment, that all may be laid open before the Lord, and nothing may be hid from him.

6. It is expressed by *a directing and looking up*, *Psal.* 53. importing how earnestly the Soul should be herein occupied, to marshal and set it self, and all its desires in order before the Lord; and in what posture the Soul should be, watching and waiting in hope for an answer: The Soul should airth God-ward, and have its face thither-ward, from whence alone help and salvation must come, and in a waiting, and expecting posture must it stand.

7. So it is expressed by *a talking or speaking with God*, *Job* 15 4. in the margin, *thou refraineest speech before God*. Abraham's servant *Gen.* 24 45. speaking of his praying, saith, *before I had done speaking in my heart*: whereby is imported the freedom and famili-

arity that is allowed in Prayer, that it is as one friend speaking to another: As also the *composedness* and *calmness* of the Soul in Prayer: They are not hurried in prayer, but in a composed and stayed manner speaking to God, as one friend to another. The same word, that is used *Job* 15. 4. is also used *Psal.* 55. 17. and 64. 1. So that Prayer is the Soul's telling to God all its case, and all its desires, with *calmness* and *composedness* of mind, and with a friendly freedom and liberty.

8. It is expressed by *a wrestling with God*: There was one that wrestled with *Jacob*, and *Jacob* with him, *Gen.* 32. 24. 25. But how did *Jacob* wrestle? See *Hos.* 12. 4. where this wrestling, and having power with God, is expressed thus, *He had power over the Angel, and prevailed, he wept and made supplication unto him.* So *Col.* 4. 12. there is mention made of *wrestling in prayer*, *Rom.* 15. 30. The word is rendered *fighting*, *John* 18. 36. 1 *Tim.* 6. 12. 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. and *striving*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 25. and hence cometh the word *Agonie*, *Luke* 22. 24. importing great anxiety, fear and affliction of mind, when one is wrestling against some great difficulty; whereby we are taught, that as in Prayer the Soul is to meet with much opposition and resistance, *partly* from within, corruption and unbelief with-holding, withdrawing, opposing, counteracting, and countermining the Soul in its designs, desires, purposes and resolutions: for the flesh is still lusting against the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 17. and the law in the members warreth against the law of the mind, *Rom.* 7. 23. *partly* from without, Satan with his temptations from all airths, and *mediums* opposing, discouraging, and fainting the Soul: against him and his might must the praying man fight, *Eph.* 6. 12. So he is to put to all his might, and use all earnestness and sericulousness of heart and mind in the matter, knowing what opposition standeth in his way, and how he must set himself against all that, without wearing, fainting, or sitting up: He is to use
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the whole strength of his Soul, all his graces, as knowing the importance and necessity of the work; and is to use importunity, gripping the promises, and all the grounds of encouragement, with a firm resolution never to let the grip go, but to hold fast, until he obtain what he would have; and for this end, great preparation is required, that the person may be in case to wrestle; as such, who were to wrestle and strive for the mastery, in the *Olympick* games, did sit and prepare themselves thereunto, that they might be in case to withstand their adversary; unto which the Apostle hath an eye, *1 Cor. 9. 25. And every one that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things.*

9. It is expressed by *a taking hold of God*, *Isa. 64. 7. And there is none, that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.* Unto which not unlike is that which we have *Isa. 27. 5. or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me.* This *taking hold of God* importeth great importunity, and the using of holy violence, (as it were) and a refusing to let him go, when he threatneth to be gone; unto which is requisite a serious upstirring of our selves, a shaking off of drowsiness, a laying forth all our strength, in the action; and a bestirring our selves to purpose. So that other phrase of *taking hold of his strength*, importeth the same, like one laying hold on the arm of one, who cometh, as it were, with a drawn sword to kill him, and holding him from smiting with it: There is (as it were) a violence used in Prayer, when the praying person, will not give over, until he get the blessing, or the answer he was desiring.

10. It is sometimes expressed by *meditating*, *Isaac* is said to have gone forth to meditate, or pray, *Gen. 24. 63.* and *David* saith *Psal. 5. 1. consider my meditation*, that is, my prayer. To teach us to know, that prayer consisteth not in words only; for we may pray with our heart, when our lips move not much, nor is our voice heard; but mainly in the ex-

ercise of the heart ; for Prayer is a work of the Soul, and a work of the Soul fixed and composed ; not wandering, but present and intent upon what is in hand. The heart in prayer must not be far away, for to draw nigh to God with the lips, when the heart is far away, is the proper work and carriage of hypocrites, *Isa.* 29. 13. But must mainly and chiefly be herein occupied, dwelling on the thoughts of their wants, and the object to whom they are praying, the encouragements they have to draw nigh, and other things of that kind, and dwelling with fixedness and steadfastness thereupon.

11. Prayer is compared to *Odours and Incense*, *Rev.* 5. 8. and *golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the Saints*. And *Psal.* 141. 2. *David saith, Let my prayer come before thee as incense*. Whereby the preciousness and excellency of prayer is held forth, with its gracious acceptance with God, when rightly performed, and how acceptable all praying persons are unto him, even as priests offering up this spiritual incense, and thereby approaching unto the living God, sitting between the Cherubims on the mercy-seat. Hereby also is held forth of what costly, well prepared materials prayer should consist, as also, with what an holy, zealous, burning and heavenly frame of heart, this duty should be gone about ; and how it should be offered up, in and thro' Jesus Christ, the true altar.

12. It is oft termed an *enquiring*, *Gen.* 25. 22. *Exod.* 18. 15. *Deut.* 11. 30. *Judges* 4. 20. *1 Sam.* 9. 9. Whereby is imported our ignorance of something, our faith of God's omniscience, our confidence of being informed by him, and our dependence on him for light and direction, in the particular, and a profession of our purpose to receive, believe and follow his counsel and direction. As also *Supplicating*, importing our wants, and sense thereof, our faith of God's ability to supply our wants, according to his riches in glory, our sense of his greatness and glory, and the

humility of our hearts in approaching unto the great God with our desires, likewise it is termed interceding, importing a friendly & humble approaching unto God with our passions, in behalf of our selves, and others, notwithstanding of God's being justly provoked by our, or their sins. So it is called an *intreating*, *Exod.* 8. 8 to point out the earnestness of the Soul, in supplicating for favour.

13. It is likewise held forth by several expressions, pointing forth the posture and gesture of the body; such as, *spreading forth of the hands*, *Exod.* 9. 29. *stretching out of the hands*, *Job* 11. 13. *lifting up of the hands*, *Exod.* 17. 11. 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. *Psal.* 28. 2. and 63. 4. *Bowing the knee*, *Eph.* 3. 14. and *falling down*, *Deut.* 9. 18 mainly to point forth thereby the frame of the Soul, and of the whole man, in prayer, to wit, that we should approach in humility, self-loathing, prostrating ourselves before the Lord, and in faith, earnestness, single dependence, hope, &c.

14. It is also pointed forth by *crying unto the Lord*, 1 *Sam.* 7. 8. *Psal.* 107. 19. 2 *Chron.* 20. 9. *Psal.* 22. 2. and 27. 7. and 28. 2. and 34. 17. *crying aloud*, *Job* 19. 7. *Psal.* 55. 17. *making a noise*, *Psal.* 55. 2. *crying with the voice*, *Psal.* 77. 1. and 142. 1. as also by *sighing*, the sighing of the needy and of the prisoner, that is, their earnest broken prayers, *Psal.* 12. 5. and 79. 11. *Ezek.* 9. 4. by *mourning*, *Psal.* 55. 2. *Joel.* 1. 9. by *Groaning*, *Psal.* 6. 6. and 102. 5. 20. and 38. 9. *Rom.* 8. 26. by *weeping*, *Joel* 2. 17. *Esther* 4. 3. *Psal.* 6. 8. *Jer.* 3. 21. and 31. 9. and by *breathing*, *Lam.* 3. 56. This using the voice and crying to the Lord sheweth, That as we should glorifie God with our glory, or tongue, and make use thereof, to express our desires unto God; so we should be as earnest, and serious, as sensible of our hazard, and of the greatness of the necessity we are in, and of the danger of a delay: *Sighing*, *mourning*, *weeping*, and *groaning*, shew the deep sense of our misery, and of the weight that is lying on, and also the brokenness of heart, whereby

the Soul is sometimes unable to express its mind in articulate petitions; and must therefore send forth emphatically significant *Sighs* and *Groans*, and *Breathings*, which are as a loud cry in the ears of the Lord.

C H A P. IV.

Some Confectories hence deduced.

HAVING briefly in the foregoing *chapter*, pointed forth something of the nature of this duty of prayer; so far, as the various expressions and epithets, whereby it is expressed, and set forth in scripture gave ground we shall now draw some confectories, or conclusions therefrom, in order to our instructions, and useful improvement of what is said.

First, We may hence see cause of wondering, at the great and merciful condescension of God, who will suffer sinners, who have so rebelled against him, and provoked him to wrath, thus to draw nigh to him, and to come boldly unto the throne of grace, as it is, *Heb. 4. 16.* O ~~what~~ mercy is here, that rebels may approach unto the King, and come into the chamber of presence, and get a kiss of the King's hand, and common with him! What love is here, that God will suffer such unworthy wretches, as we are, draw nigh to the holy one of *Israel*, and to make known our suits and requests unto him? What condescending grace is here, that such, as are heirs of Hell by nature, may come and talk with the most High, and lay out all their heart before him; ask all they need; yea, & knock at his door, and be importunate with him for a satisfying return? See how Christ teacheth us this, and encourageth us hereunto, by these two parables, one is, *Luke 11. 5, 6, 7, 8.* And he said unto them, *Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at mid night, and say unto him, friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine, in*

his journey, is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him. And he from within shall answer, and say trouble me not, the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed, I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, tho' he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend; yet because of his importunity, he will rise, and give him as many as he needeth. The other is, *Luke 18. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.* In both which places, there are other things held forth, to this purpose, to encourage unto prayer, and to importunity and constancy in prayer, without fainting. Sure, if we had right apprehensions of the matter, we could not but fall a wondering at this free grace, love and condescendency in God, who sets his door open to such, as we are, that we may come even to his throne, and tell him all that is in our heart, make known to him all our requests; seek his face and favour, cry unto him, weep before him, tell him all our ails and necessities.

Secondly, We may hence see cause of wondering at our own folly, who do not more make use of this high and glorious priviledge: He would be a wonder for unworthy ingratitude among men, who having the prince's ear when ever he will, and liberty to commun of all matters with him, and to present all his suits and requests, when ever he pleased, and as oft as he pleased; and yet would undervalue this priviledge, and rarely make use of this favour, notwithstanding of his many and daily renewed necessities. And may he not much more be looked on, as a prodigie of folly and ingratitude, who not being able to subsist without God, yea, and lying under the sentence of his law, and abnoxious to his wrath and curse, and having a patent Way made thro' Jesus Christ, of approaching unto God, and God's ear always ready to hear; and yet hath so little heart unto, or pleasure in this exercise? What a Wonder is this, that we value his honour so little, and think so meanly of that, which should be our glory? Will

the Lord be content to hear all our heart-secrets, & admit us to intimate familiarity, to talk with him, as one heart friend with another; to consult him in all our necessities, to ask his counsel in all we have to do, to know his mind, in his great works, even in the mysteries of state, of the state of glory, and to know his designs, secret purposes, and wise counsels and determinations; and shall this be our burden? may we consult him, who is KING of kings, and LORD of lords, about all our petty matters, and go to him when ever we will, were it at midnight, and the oftner we come, be made the welcomer; and shall this be looked upon as a yoke, that we are weary of? O what would some, shut up in close prison, in their enemies hand, far from all friends and acquaintances, give for liberty, to speak with one of their near relations and dear friends? But behold he, who is the nearest and greatest friend imaginable, standeth at hand, and with him, may we commun of all things, and to him may we with the greatest of freedom, unbosom our whole Soul; and to him may we go, where ever we be; no prison doors, or prison-walls, can hinder our fellowship with him; and yet how unwilling are we to make use of this great priviledge and advantage? How may that complaint of the Lord's break our hearts, *Isa. 43. 22. But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; But thou hast been weary of me, O Israel?* It was a Weariness to them to u'e God as a friend, and call for his help in their necessity. Nay the Lord saith, *Isa. 66. 4. When I called, none did answer; when I spake they did not hear.* Not only would they not speak to him; but when he urged kindness on them, and would have communed with them, and kept up correspondence with them, they would not give him an hearing, they turned away the ear, as abhorring his fellowship.

Thirdly, We may see, That in Prayer, the heart is to be mainly, and mostly occupied and exercised: It is the heart, that must seek God, and speak unto him

him; yea, with all the heart, *Psal.* 119. 2, 10, 145. 2 *Chron.* 15. 12. and 22. 9. *Jer.* 29. 13. It is the heart that God seeketh, and with which he is pleased. The heart must be lift up to God in Prayer: When the heart speaketh not, the man prayeth not, what ever fair flourishes of multiplied words he useth. The mouth in prayer, must expresse the desires of the Soul, the inward communings, motions and meditations of the heart, otherwise prayer is no prayer; but a parcel of empty insignificant words and sounds; Words in prayer, can signifie nothing, when they do not signifie what the heart is saying, and what the Soul is busied about; so that vvhhen prayer proceedeth aright, the petitions are first framed in the heart, and then the mouth uttereth them, as the petitions and desires of the heart: In right prayer, the heart is speaking to God by the mouth; otherwise the Work is but lip-vvork, a drawing near to God with the lips, when the heart is far away, which service the Lord abhorreth. See *Matth.* 15. 8. and *Mark* 7. 6. with *Isa.* 29. 13 14. Hence,

1. That is not to be accounted the best prayer, wherein are the finest Words, and the best flourishes of expressions; yea, and it may be, all of them scripture expressions and sentences: But that, wherein the heart is most exercised, most lifted up to God, most vented before him, draweth most nigh unto him, and is most warmed in affection to him.

2. Tho' vve be obliged to glorifie God vvith our glory, and to speak out our Prayers and praises, to his glory, vvhen called thereunto; yet prayer may be made unto the most High, vvhen the voice is not heard, *Nehemiah* prayed unto the God of heaven, even vvhen he vvvas serving the king at the table, *Neh.* 2. 4. So *Hannah* prayed before the Lord, but her voice vvvas not heard, only her lips moved; for she spake in her heart, 1 *Sam.* 1. 12, 13. Nay, a person may pray, vvhen he cannot get an articulate Word to say; his heart may speak to God in a groan,

in a sigh or in a tear : And when the heart speaketh, God heareth the cry of the heart. The Lord said to *Moses*, *Exod*, 14. 15. *Wherefore criest thou unto me ?* And yet we hear nothing of his crying, or speaking unto God ; but of his speaking unto the children of *Israel*, *Verse*: 13. 14. But it is like, his heart did then send up a loud cry unto the Lord, as a swift post, crying, *Haste, haste*. So *Christ*. *John*, 11. 41. said, *Father, I thank thee, that thou hast heard me ;* And yet we read not of his praying with audible words, anent that particular, till he spake thus ; but we hear of his *groaning in Spirit, and troubling himself*, *Verse*, 33, of his *Weeping*, *Verse*, 35 and of *His groaning again in himself*, *Verse*, 33. And all these were Prayers unto his Father.

3. To Pray by book or after a Prescribed Form, or with words learned by heart and poken, as a Parot pratteth is not the right way of prayer : for here, either the heart speaks not at all, or it followeth the tongue and the eye ; whileas in right prayer, the tongue should follow the heart, and the heart should first frame the desire, and speak inwardly, and the tongue should follow, and articulate what the heart hath spoken. This is the right method, and the natural method of uttering our minds in Prayer to God. *Christ's* teaching his disciples to Pray, was not to invert this order of nature, and to affix them to the use of so many words ; but to prescribe matter to their meditations, and to instruct them, in the right manner of addressing themselves to God ; by holding forth unto them, in a few heads, the sum and substance of all their necessities, and that in an instructive order. But we now where find, that they used this, as a prescribed form ; but rather followed it, as a directory : And it is observable, That in that pattern of Prayer, he doth not instruct them, to ask in his Name ; as he did afterward in our Text, *John*, 14. 13 14, and 16. 23, 24. As there were many other material and substantial points of truth, which they

they understood not until afterward, the Lord accommodating himself, in instructing them, unto their Capacities.

4. We may learn also hence, That in Prayer our special care should be, to have the heart kept in a praying frame and posture: for that is it, the Lord taketh much notice of, and he accounteth nothing Prayer, where the heart is dead, and speechless. Seeing he estimates Prayer according to the heart, we should have a special eye to it, and be sure, that it be speaking unto him; whether our lips move or not.

5. We see also hence, that other work needeth not hinder or obstruct all Prayer: seeing the main thing in Prayer, is the heart speaking to God: A man may Pray vvhile vvalking in the vway on the streets alone. or in company; or while he is about his ordinary imployment and calling; for even then the heart may take a turn with God; and a post may be dispatched to heaven, an hearty Groan, or sigh, or thought and ejaculation may be dispatched to heaven, and may there be welcomed as Prayer, As *Nehemiah's* heart prayed, even when he was standing beside the king and serving him. *Jacob* while he is making his Testament, as it were, and speaking to his children *Gen. 49.* quickly dispatcheth a post to heaven in a few words, *Verse, 18, I have waited for thy salvation O Lord,* . He takes a word of God, in the mean time many such ejaculations and apostrophes find we in the Scripture, clearing this truth.

6 We may be hence instructed, that the best preparation to Prayer, is not to get a company of good words set in order; but to get our hearts in a right and praying frame, sensible of our wants, and of the great necessity of the particulars we ask, of our own unworthiness, and of the greatness of that majesty, with whom we have to do; and so our hearts and souls may be in case to speak to God, and present our desires; without which an heap of words will signify nothing with the hearer of Prayer.

7 When the heart prayeth, much will go in a few words; yea, a groan and sigh to God, will have the force of a long Prayer. The soul's breathing & crying but, *Abba Father*, will be construed to be a great Prayer like the last breathing of Christ on the Cross, *Luke, 23, 26.* and saying, *Father into thy hands I commend my Spirit.* and Stephen saying, *Acts, 7. 59. 60. Lord Jesus receive my Spirit,* and, *Lord lay not this sin to their charge.* A few words when the soul and the heart of man is in them, is a large Prayer before G O D.

4thly, we may hence understand, That it is a greater difficulty to pray unto God aright, than we ordinarily imagine: it were easy to pray, if no more were therein required, but the setting of some fine words together, and saying these over: But when it is an earnest seeking; knocking at the Lord's door, and a wrestling with him, for the blessing; a lifting up of the soul, and a pouring out of the heart before God; and a taking hold of God, that saith, that there is no small difficulty to get it rightly gone about: *Partly*, because our hearts are naturally so untractable, and so averse from this exercise; & there are so many evils & corruptions in them, all opposite to this christian exercise; *partly*, because Satan with his inward suggestions, and outward temptations, doth and will constantly stand in the way, either to keep us back from performing the duty; or discourage us, and make us heartless in the performance.

5thly, We may hence see, both what cause we have to mourn over our Prayers, wherein we fail so much, as shall be shown afterward; As also what need there is for divine Help; for the assistance of the Spirit to help our infirmities; for it is He only who is the Spirit of God's Son, that can teach us to cry, *Abba Father, Gal, 4. 6.* even he, who is the Spirit of Adoption. *Rom, 8, 15.* It will not be learning, readiness of speech, and the like abilities, that will

will carry us through this duty acceptably : Tho' such things be requisite unto the gift of Prayer ; yet unto the grace of Prayer they will make little help : nor will they contribute the least mite unto acceptable Prayer, when the heart is not in a frame, nor is principally speaking to God in the duty.

6thly, Hence we may discover several failings and faults in our Prayers, some whereof we shall here mention ; As.

1. Our souls are not pressed with the sense and feeling of our wants, and we are not pinched with them ; So that our petitions die in our mouth, as they are framed there, having never been framed in the heart, which frameth no suits or supplications but felt need hunger made the prodigal return, and desire to be among his father's hired servants ; sense and feeling made the blind men cry *Son of David have mercy on us.* The man in the parable, that came to seek three loaves from his friend, had none at home to refresh his friend, that was come from his journey ; felt need, and pinching necessity presseth best to this duty of Prayer ; but when this is away, there is no heart speaking unto God, no hearty desires, nor thirsting of soul, and therefore no Prayer : Howbeit there may be a multitude of multiplied petitions, as to many lip-desires, and lip supplications.

2 We do not value aright the mercies, we are asking ; we have not high and suitable thoughts of those great things, we frame wordy petitions about them ; as not seeing the absolute necessity we stand in of those things wee see not our life and soul lying at the stake. The woman of *Canaan* knew her daughter was undone unless Christ helped ; and therefore she petitioned and petitioned again ; Hence,

3 Because we neither know the greatness of our loss and misery, in the want of the blessings ; nor our happiness and felicity, in the enjoying of them ; therefore we know not what it is to be serious and earnest

earnest in our Prayers; we oft Pray, as if we were indifferent whether we received what we ask, or not; yea our Prayers are oft so cold-rise, that none that heare h would think we had a mind indeed unto the mercies, we are seeking with our mouths; Where is our knocking? where is our crying? where is our wrestling? where is our longing and thirsting for the living God? where is our groaning, and our breaking of heart? where is our panting after him, as *Psal*, 42, 1?

4, Hence also proceedeth our fainting and wearying of the duty we soon sit up, we continue not crying and knocking, as such as would take no nay-say, and as the importunate widow, *Luke*, 18. We are soon discouraged, as if it were in vain to seek any more; The woman of *Canaan*, *Matth*, 15. would not take a nay-say, discouragement would not thrust her away; Christ's not answering at first, did not put her from the door; but she knocked again; And when Christ seemed to say her nay, and to call her a Dog, and that she must have none of the childrens Bread; yet she continued, and wisely improved these seeming discouragements unto her own advantage.

5 As also our formality, and customariness in performing this duty; This is another evil in our prayers, which is to be lamented: Oft a custom, or desire to stop the mouth of a natural conscience, or to have a name, of the like, set us on to this duty, and not our own necessities, nor conscience to a command, that we may do homage unto the Lord; Hence as our principles are not sound; so our practices are but slight, as our end is to keep up a form, so our performance of the duty is but formal; our heart is not in it, nor at it, as it cometh not from the heart, so it goeth without the heart, and is nothing but an heartless, dead soul-less carcass, or heap of words and syllables.

7 We may hence discover the want of a spiritual heavenly frame, that should be in our Prayers; for
our

Chap. IV. *Confessarics hence deduced.* 43
our Hearts are not lifted up unto the Lord, but ly
funk under sinful lusts, and the cares of the world,
and helike: If ever we would pray aright, there
must be at least a wrestling to be from under these
mountains, and the soul in prayer must mount up in
desires, and there must be a lifting at the heavy heart,
a heaving it up, a restlessness until we get it a going
upward.

7. We are not base enough in our own eyes, when
we approach unto the holy Lord; We see not our
own vileness; and therefore cannot speak aright unto
him: The poor *Publican* saw himself base; and
therefore stood a far off, and smote upon his breast,
not daring to lift up his eyes; as knowing both what
he himself was, and what an holy God he had to do
with, and said, *Lord be merciful to me a sinner*. We
see also what humble thoughts the *Prodigal* had of
himself, when he returned. Were we right in the
duty of Prayer, we would be covered with an holy
blushing, as conscious of our own unworthiness, &
so would gladly prostrate our selves at the Lord's feet.
Abraham when he was speaking to God, *Gen*, 18.
27. 29. looked on himself as dust and ashes. A proud
heart can never pray acceptably; for the Lord de-
spiseth such, and looketh to them afar off. But a
a right petitioner at God's throne must be an hum-
ble, heart-broken sinner; for God giveth grace to
the humble, but resisteth the proud, *Jam*, 4, 6
Prov. 3. 34. *1 Pet*. 5, 5. Wherefore such as pray
aright must in the sense of their own unworthiness fall
down before the Lord. in a most submissive humble
manner as unworthy of the least of God's favours.

8 We are great strangers to that holy freedom and
boldness in our accis, that the Lord alloweth his
children to have when they come before him, we
pray not to him, as A Father' reconciled in Christ;
we come not, as having the way made patent unto
us by *Jesus Christ*; We know not what it is to talk
and commune with the Lord: we use not that holy

familiarite, that God alloweth, which is very consistent with a humble frame of spirit. A child can come unto his Father with all due reverence, observing the due distance. and Paying all due respect; & yet come with a filial boldness and confidence and lay forth all his necessities, and open his heart unto his Father, in hope of being accepted and heard: And so may we, and should we do, in approaching unto God.

9. We know not what it is to watch for, and lay hold on the fit opportunity for Prayer; as wrestlers will watch for, and lay hold on any advantage they can have of him, they wrestle with. The poor woman of *Canaan*, when wrestling with Christ, for a mercy to her daughter, laid hold on Christ's evening her to a dog, and thereupon pleaded, that at least she might have a dogs portion, a crumb, which would do her business. We know not what it is, to take hold of the opportunity of wind and tide, when a fresh gale of the spirit cometh, or when the Lord draweth nigh, and by his dispensations, is, as it were, saying, This is a good day, call now, and ye shall be heard, Thus did *Moses*, *Exod*, 33. when the Lord said to him, *Verse*, 17. *I will do this thing also, which thou hast spoken*. Then *Moses*, *Verse* 18. said, *I beseech Thee shew me thy glory*. And *David*, *Psal*, 27, 8. *When thou saidst seek ye my face, my heart answered, thy face Lord will I seek*. Nor know we how to improve a praying season, when put into our hands; such as a time of trouble and affliction, *Psal*, 50, 15. *Janr*. 5: 15. *Jonah*, 3. 4. *Exod*, 32, 10, 11. 14.

10 Another fault in our addresses to God, is, That we are not open-hearted enough; we pour not forth our Hearts before him. We lay not all our case plainly forth before him. We use not full freedom, in telling God all that is in our heart; we reserve and hide much, we make not a free and full confession of all our miscarriages, and of all the parts of our evil frame: And this is far from that plain-hearted dealing

that

that God calleth for, and that children should uter with their father, Especially we with him, who needeth not information from us, as knowing our case, and all things that concern us, better than we do ourselves; but desireth and loveth our ingenuity, sincerity and plain dealing, and our evidencing our faith of his being an all-seeing God, to whom nothing is, or can be hid.

11. We know little of that holy importunity that ought to be used in Prayer, because our hearts are little in them: We labour not, we fight not, we strive not, with all our heart, strength, soul, might, and activity, we are not fighting as in an agony; as the word is, *Col*, 4, 12. We put not forth all our strength; stretching out all our members, joints, and limes of the new man. Our Prayer should be without ceasing, *1 Thess*, 5 17. and with instant continuance, *Rom*, 12, 12, we see how David was early at works when he spake of preventing God, *Psal*, 119. 147. and 5. 3. and 55. 17. And *Heman Psal*, 88, 13. How earnest was *David*, when he cried out *How long?* *Psal*, 13. So importunate was he, that he could hardly bear a delay; and yet he did not in this limit the holy one of *Israel*; but only expressed the vehement desire of his soul. Such as are indeed importunate, are not soon discouraged, as the blind man, *Mark*, 10. 47. 48. The more that many charged him to hold his peace, he cried out the more a great deal, *Thou son of David have mercy on me*; nay, their own desperate like condition will not stop their mouth. *David* though the waters were come in unto his soul, and he was sinking in deep mire, and had no standing, and was overflowed with floods; Yet he Prayed, *Psal*, 69, 1, 2. 3. So did *Jonah*. chap, 2. when he was in the belly of hell, or the grave, when he was cast into the deep, in the midst of the seas, floods compassed him, and all God's billows and waves passed over him, when the weeds were wrapped about his head, yea, when his soul fainted within him,

12 From all these may this other great fault in our Prayers be discovered, *to wit*, Want of faith of being heard; hence we faint, we despond, we give over, we knock not, are not instant, in all manner of Prayer and supplications, we renew not our desires, because we doubt, if we shall come (speed; we have not faith in God, as willing, able, and ready to grant what we ask; We have not faith in Christ, as our intercessor and grand High priest: nor is there that faith in the promises, and grounds of hope, laid down in the word, for strengthening and confirming our confidence and assurance, that ought to be according to that, *Matth, 21, 22. And all things whatsoever ye ask in Prayer, believing ye shall receive; and that Jam, 1. 5, 6, 7, 8. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed; for let not that man think, that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*

C H A P. V.

Prayer cleared to be a Duty.

OUR LORD, when he is here encouraging his disciples to pray, supposeth, that this is an unquestionable duty, as we hinted above: now this cometh next to be spoken to; and because few I suppose, will have the face to question, or deny it, we might here pass it; were it not that the clearing up of this, in a few particulars, might help to discover the hainousness of the Sin of those who neglect or lay aside this duty.

In order therefore to the manifesting of this to be a duty

duty, I shall only point at a few Heads,

First, If we consider God the *Father*, we will see this duty enforced: For,

1. Prayer is enjoined by him, as the great law-giver, in the very law of nature, and it remaineth engraven so deeply in the heart of man, that it cannot be quieted, obliterated and extinct: Hence, the very heathens, and such as know little of the true and living God, have an impression of calling on their false gods, in a time of strait; so that they would rather pray to an idol, that could neither hear, nor see, than pray to no God. Hence

2. Prayer is a piece of that natural worship that is due from us to God, as our Creator, and great Lord Sovereign. He is the fountain of our being, and our Lord; and therefore we should worship him, according to that, *Psal*, 45, 11. Now worship includeth Prayer, and is often taken for it, as when Satan tempted Christ to fall down and worship him, *Luke*, 4, 7. *Matth*, 4. 9. and elsewhere.

3. Prayer is an open, plain and practical declaration of our manifold obligations to God, and dependence upon him, and of our conviction and acknowledgment, that we cannot live without him: And it is certain, That we do, and must depend upon the Lord, and cannot live one moment without him; for in him we live, we move, and have our being, *Acts*, 17. 28. It must also be confessed to be our duty, to acknowledge this to his glory, and to pay him thankfully this piece of homage.

4. God being the sole fountain of all the good we enjoy, and of all the good we need, spiritual or temporal, for soul or for body; he must be acknowledged and honoured as such, by our going to him in Prayer, to seek what we want, and to return him thanks for what we receive.

5. Our God being the true and living God, Omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, good and gracious, &c. we must by Prayer solemnly acknowledge
and

and declare that so he is indeed and in truth, and that we believe him to be so, even a God, that is privy to our condition, that is at hand to supply our wants, and able to make all grace to abound, and grant us, out of his free grace & goodness, all we stand in need of.

6 He is a God that heareth Prayers. *Psal.* 65, 2. and not like the deaf idol gods of the heathens, that neither hear, nor see, nor can help, in less, or in more; and we must declare our faith of this, by praying to him; or if we will not pray, we in effect say, He is but an idol, that cannot help, and not God, that heareth Prayers.

7. It is God only that forgiveth sins, and bestoweth the blessings of the new covenant, and performeth the promises, made unto his People, in Christ, and he should be acknowledged, and openly owned as such, by Prayer to him for these favours; and by thanksgivings therefore, that he may be glorified. See *Ezek.* 36, 25, 26, 27. &c. compared with *ver.* 37.

Secondly, if we consider God the Son, we will also see ground for this duty: For,

1. Christ being the way to the Father, and no man coming to the Father, but by him, *Joh.* 14, 6. we are then called to come to the Father through him, and to approach to the Father in Prayer, with boldness and confidence, as having access made unto us, through Christ, *Heb.* 4, 16. So *Heb.* 10, 19, 20, 21, 22. *Having therefore brethren boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus: by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say his flesh. And having an high priest over the house of God: Let us draw nigh with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.* &c. Prayer therefore, is an open declaration and proclamation of our faith of Christ's being an high priest, and a great high priest, who is passed into the heavens, and of our having access with boldness and confidence through him, and a new and living way consecrate to us
through

through his flesh; and is the actual improvement of this great advantage, a drawing nigh through this high priest, and walking in a new and living way.

2 Christ is the great intercessor, who ever liveth to make intercession, *Heb. 7, 25.* And he offered p incense in order to the making of the Prayers of his people acceptable, *Rev, 8, 3, 4.* And another Angel (this is Christ) came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the Prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. And the smoak of the incense, which came with the Prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out of the Angels hand.

3. He hath wrought great work of redemption, having satisfied justice, paid down the redemption-money, offered up himself a satisfactory sacrifice for sins: And this by Prayer and praises should be acknowledged: and therefore, He being God, should be worshipped and called upon.

4. He is the great Prophet: and therefore we should come unto him by Prayer and supplications, that we may be taught, and instructed, and led in the way of God, we must cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice for understanding. We must seek her as silver, and search for her, as for hid treasure, *Prov. 2, 4, 5.* This Knowledge is the substantial wisdom of the father, as we see, *Prov, 8.* and by Prayer must we watch daily at his gates, waiting at the posts of his door, *Prov, 8, 34.*

5 He is a great king, and must be honoured and served by Prayer; he is our Lord, and therefore we must worship him, *Psal, 45. 11.* Prayer is a part of our kissing of the Son, *Psal, 2, 12.* It is a part of the song of the Lamb, to say, *Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God almighty: just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy Name? for thou only art holy. For all nations shall come and worship before thee*
D for

for thy judgments are made manifest Rev 15, 3, 4.

6. Christ taught his disciples how to Pray, *Matth* 6. *Luke*, 11. and frequently by parable, *Luke*, 11 and 18. did inculcate this duty, and press constancy therein: And in his last discourse, as in the Text here, and *Chap.* 15, and 16. did encourage them to Pray.

7. Christ held forth this duty to us, by his own example, *Matth*, 14 28, and 19, 13. and 26 39, to 45. *Mark*, 6, 46, and 14, 32, 35, 39. *Luke*. 6. 12. and 9, 28, 29. and 22. 32. *John*, 17. throughout *Luke*, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. In the days of his flesh, he offered up Prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, &c. *Heb.* 5. 7.

Thirdly, If we consider God the *Holy Ghost*, we will see that Prayer is a duty: For

1. He is called the spirit of Prayer, or of supplication, and is promised in the latter days for this end, *Zech*, 12, 10. *And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications.* If then we should deny this to be a duty, we should deny the spirit to be a spirit of supplications.

2. He is given, as the spirit of adoption for this end, that we may cry, *Abba, Father*; *Rom*, 8. 15. That is, He is sent unto the soul of God's Children, to clear up their interest in God, and to assure them of their state of adoption, and thereby prompt them, to cry unto God, as their Father.

3. Yea, *Paul* writing to the *Galatians*, chap, 4 6. saith, *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father.* The spirit is sent into the hearts of God's children, there to dwell, and among other works, which he is to do there, he is to cry, *Abba Father*: He is there crying or Praying, by framing their petitions, and supplications to them: Consonant is this, to what this same apostle saith, *Rom*, 8. 26. *Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not, what we should*

should Pray for as we ought, but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings, which cannot be uttered.

4. By the spirit we have access to the Father, through Christ, *Eph*, 2. 18. Prayer must therefore be a duty, or this access by the spirit is a vain useless thing.

5. We are bidden pray always with all Prayer and supplication in the spirit, *Eph*, 6. 18. They must offend then against him ; who will not own this for a duty.

6. All the graces, whereby we are enabled, and put in case to pray, are of the spirit ; for they are his fruits *Gal*, 5. 21. 22. such, as Faith, Love. &c.

Fourthly, The nature state, calling and profession of the saints manifest prayer to be a duty : For,

1. Their adoption, and being brought into God's family as his near children, layeth this obligation on them, to cry to God, and to pray to him as their Father.

2. Their new nature setteth them on to it ; for it inclineth them and determineth their hearts God-ward. When *Saul* is made a convert, he is brought to his knees, and found a Praying man, *Acts*, 9, 11. The Lord said to *Ananias*, *Go and enquire for one called Saul of Tarsus ; for behold he prayeth*. The new converts, *Acts*, 2. 42. *Continued stedfastly in Prayers*.

3. The saints are an holy priesthood, and must by office offer up spiritual sacrifice, 1 *Pet*, 2. 5. And Prayer is a chief part of their spiritual sacrifice, together with praises, whereby they shew forth the praises, or vertues of him, who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light. *Verse*, 7. They should offer to him, *The calves of their lips*, *Hos*, 14. 2. And what are these ? see *Heb*, 13, 15. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praises to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips : confessing or giving thanks to his Name*. We read of the sacrifice of thanksgiving, *Psal*, 116, 17. and of the *Sacrifice of praise*, *Jer*, 33, 11.

4. It is the Description of the wicked, That they call not upon God, *Psal*, 5, 2, 4. and 14, 24. & 10. *Jer* 10. 25. *Psal*. 79, 6. *Rom*. 3, 9. And upon the other hand, it is the description of God's children, That they call upon God, 1 *Cor*, 1. 2. Hence *David* saith *Psal*, 109, 4. *I Prayer*, as if he had been wholly devoted to, and taken up with that work and duty, and nothing else.

5. Their relation to God, as his servants, carrieth this with it, as we see, *Psal*. 116. 16, 17. *I am thy servant*, said *David*, and what followeth? *I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord*.

5thly, The daily necessities of the saints confirm and enforce this duty : For.

1. Many a burden outward and inward, have they lying upon them ; burdens of duties, that they find themselves unable to stand under ; burdens of afflictions and crosses, that are like to crush them ; burdens of sin and corruption prevailing over them, and causing them groan : And all the burthens must they cast upon the Lord by Prayer, *Psal*. 55, 22. Strength and grace must be sought by Prayer from the Lord, that they may be enabled to stand under these loads.

2. Many a time are they in the dark, environed with difficulties inward and outward, and know not what to do, or what hand to turn unto : And by Prayer must light be sought from him, who is the fountain of light. that in his light they may see light. By Prayer must they seek understanding, guidance, direction, and leading, as others have done, *Psal*, 31, 3. 1 *Thes*, 3, 11. 2. 2 *Thes*, 3, 5. *Psal* L19. 27, 33. 34.

3. As they must have their daily bread, and all things necessary for their life, and outward well being, from God ; so must their spiritual life be upheld, nourished and strengthened with new and fresh influences, supplies and communications of the spirit of grace . And for all these must they

be daily on their knees, and petitioners at the throne of grace, *Matth*, 6, *Heb*, 4, 16. *Psal*, 68, 28. and 119. 28. *1 Pet*, 5, 10. *In every thing must they make their requests known by prayer.* *Phil*. 4. 6.

4. Their failings and short comings, omissions and transgressions are many; and pardon must be sought by Prayer, *Psal*, 19, 12. and 51. throughout, and 25, 11, 18. *Exod*, 34, 9. *Numb*, 14. 19. *Mat*. 6, 12.

5 They have many enemies to wrestle against, & without a body of death, an evil heart of unbelief within satan & the world without, with their snares, allurements, threatnings, temptations, persecutions, and the like: And by prayer must they seek not to be led into temptation, but to be delivered from that evil One; as the Lord's Prayer instructeth us. *We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities against powers, against the rulers of the darknejs of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places:* And therefore we must Pray, *always with all Prayer, and supplication in the spirit, &c.* *Eph*. 6, 12, 18.

6. They have many outward necessities, concerning their outward callings, occupations, and station in the world; and in all these things they must acknowledge the Lord by Prayer, according to that *Prov*, 3, 6. *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths;* and that *Phil*, 4, 6. *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by Prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.*

7 They have visitations, chastisements, crosses, afflictions and judgments from the hand of God, because of sin, to lay to heart, and to chase them to God by Prayer, that either they may be removed in mercy, or sanctified unto them, *Jam*, 5, 13, 14. *Psal*, 50, 15.

8 They have several good works upon their hand, some of more publick use, some of more private use; and hereunto is the blessing and assistance of God re-

quisite, which must be sought by Prayer; as *Abraham's* servant sought to the Lord by Prayer, for a prosperous journey, *Gen*, 24. So did *Paul*, *Rqm*, 1 10.

9. They have all the blessings of the new covenant Grace and Glory, to seek by Prayer, *Ezek*, 36, 37. *Matth*, 6. 33.

Sixthly, It is the plain law, and express command of God, that we Pray unto him: The law of nature (as we heard) enjoineth it. And it is oft commanded in the written law of God, *Eph*, 6. 18. *Phil*, 4, 6. *Rom*, 12, 12. *Col*, 4, 2. *Matth*, 26, 41. *Mark*, 13, 33. and 14. 38. *Luke*, 21, 36. and 22, 40. 46. *Jam*, 5, 13. 14, 16. *Jude*. ver 20. The neglect of it is often charged as their great guilt, *Isai*, 43, 22. *Hos*. 7. 7. and confessed as a sin, *Isai*, 64, 7. *Dan*, 9, 13. The example of other saints, registrate in scripture for our use and instruction, laith bonds on us, and hath the force of a command: We might here cite the instances of the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and the saints; but it being so well known, we pass it.

Seventhly, Our relations to others in the world, call for this duty: Hence the Lord teacheth us to Pray, with and for others, when he bids us say, *Our Father*, &c. So that we are,

1. To Pray for magistrates, and all in authority, 1 *Tim*, 2, 1, 2.

2. For ministers in the discharge of their work, 1 *Thes*, 5, 25. 2 *Thes*, 3, 2. *Heb*, 13, 18. *Col*, 4.

3. *Eph*, 6, 19. 3. For our brethren, *Jam*, 5, 16. *Job*, 4. 42, 8, 10.

4. Superiors for inferiors, especially pastors for their flocks, 1 *Sam*, 12. 22. *Rom*, 1, 9. *Eph*, 1, 16. *Phil*, 1. 4. *Col*, 1, 3. 1 *Thes*, 1, 2. 2 *Tim*, 1. 3. And fathers for their children, *Job*, 1, 5. Magistrates for subjects; as we see in *Moses* and *David*.

5. For friends and acquaintances, and all men indefinitely, 1 *Tim*, 2, 1.

6. Yea,

6. Yea, and for our enemies, *Matth*, 5. 44. *Luke*, 23, 34. *Acts*, 7, 60.

Eightly, Not only are there commands for the duty it self; but also for the manner, or way how the duty of Prayer should be performed, As 1. We must Pray incessantly; without ceasing. *Rom*, 1, 9, *Acts* 12. 5. *Eph*, 6, 18. 1 *Thes*, 3, 10. and 5, 17. *Rom*. 12. 12. *Luke*. 18. 1. &c. 2dly. Exceedingly with fervency, and earnestness. 1 *Thes*. 3. 10. 3dly. Every where, without respect of places, 1 *Tim*. 2. 8. 4thly. with holy hands, and without wrath, 1 *Tim*, 2. 8. *Jam*. 4. 8. 5thly. with faith, *Jam*, 1, 6. and 5. 13. 1 *Tim*, 2. 8. 6thly. with all manner of supplication, *Eph*, 6. 18. 7thly. in the spirit, *Eph*. 6. 18. *Jude*, V 20. 8thly, with watching, *Eph*. 6. 18. 9. Fervently with zeal. *Jam*, 5, 16. *Col*, 4. 12. 10thly. with reverence, *Rev*, 4, 9. 10. *Psal*. 95. 6. *Dan*, 6. 10. 11thly. with the whole heart, *Psal*, 119. 145. *Hos*, 7. 14. 12thly,. Mightily, *Jonah*, 3, 8.

Ninthly, Herein standeth, in a great part, our communion with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, in making all our requests known by Prayer, unto him through Christ, in laying before him all our case, all our wants, and our straits and difficulties; or in seeking counsel, strength, light, help, deliverance, and what our case calleth for: in communing and talking with him, as our friend; yea, as our father; and in thankful receiving his favour and mercies.

Tenthly, Yea, all the commanded duties, that ly upon us, enforce this duty of Prayer, because of our selves, as of our selves, we are not able to think any thing, far less to do; but our sufficiency is of God, 2 *Cor*. 3. 5. Strength and ability for ever commanded duty must be had from God; for we must work both to will and to do in us, according to his good pleasure, *Phil*, 2. 13. Now in his influences, help and assistance must be had by Prayer.

Eleventhly, in behalf of Christs kingdom in the

world, Prayer is a necessary duty : for it is said *Psal* 72. 15. That *Prayer also shall be made for him continually.* And Christ taught us to Pray daily, *Thy kingdom come*, that is, That his enemies may be brought down. the kingdom of sin and Satan destroyed, *Psal*, 68. 1. 18. *Rev.* 12. 10. 11. *Jud.* 5. 31. That the Jews may be called, and brought in to Christ's kingdom, *Rom.* 10. 1. According to what is foretold, *Rom*, 11, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, *Rev*, 16. 12 and 19. 1. &c. That gospel ambassadors may be sent forth, *Matth.* 9. 38. The fulness of the Gentiles brought in, *Rom*, 11. 25, 26. *Psal*, 67. *throughout.* The gospel made successful, 2 *Thess*, 3. 1. *Col.* 4. 3. *Ephes*, 6, 19. The ordinances thereof being purely dispensed, and made effectual through the blessing of the Lord, both for converting, of such as are yet in nature : and for confirming, comforting and building up in their most holy faith, such as are brought in and converted, *Acts*, 4. 29. 30. *Rom*, 15, 29, 30, 31. 2 *Thes.* 1. 11. and 2. 16, 17. As also, That the day of the solemnization of the marriage of the Lamb's with the bride the lamb's wife may be hastned, *Rev*, 22. 17. 20. *And the spirit and the Bride say come, and let him, that heareth say, Come.*
 ——— *Even so come LORD JESUS.*

Twelfthly, In reference to the honouring and glorifying of God in the world, Prayer is prescribed and called for ; for Christ taught us to say, *Hallowed be thy name* : That is we are to Pray, that God would make us and others, fit by his grace both to know & to acknowledge, and highly to esteem of God, of his titles, attributes, ordinances, word, works, and whatsoever he is pleased to make himself known by, *Psal.* 67, 2, 3, and 83, 18, and 86, 10, -- 15. and 147. 19. 20. and 130: 19, 1, 2, 3. and 145 *throughout*, 2 *Cor*, 2, 14, 15. As also that he would enable us, to glorify him in thought word and deed, *Psal*, 103,. 1. and 19. 14. *Phil*, 1. 9. 11. Moreover, that he would prevent and remove
 athe-

Chap. VI *The sinfulness of the Neglect of Prayer.* 57. atheism, ignorance, idolatry, prophaneisms, and whatsoever is dishonourable to him, *Psal.* 67. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Eph.* 1, 17, 18. *Psal.* 98, 7. and 74. 18. 22. 23. 2 *King.* 19. 15. 16. And finally, that by his powerful and overruling providence, he would direct and dispose of all things to his own glory, 1. *Chron.* 20. 6, 10. 11. 12. *Psal.* 83, throughout and 140. 4. 5. *Matth.* 6. 10.

Thirteenthly. In reference to obedience unto God's holy will, Prayer is requisite; for we are taught to Pray, *Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven:* Whereby we Pray, that God would remove all blindnesses, weaknels, indispatedness, unwillingness, and Perverseness of heart, whereby we neither can nor will obey him, *Eph.* 1, 17. 18. and 5, 16. *Matth.* 26. 40, 41. *Jer.* 31. 18. 19. As also: that by his grace he would make us able and willing to know, to do and submit to his will, in all things. *Psal.* 119. 1. 8, 35, 36. and that with the like humility, cheerfulness, faithfulness, diligence, zeal sincerity and constancy, as the angels do in heaven, *Acts.* 21, 14. *Micah.* 6, 8. *Psal.* 100. 2. *Job.* 1. 21. 2 *Sam.* 15. 25. *Isai.* 38, 3. *Psal.* 119. 4. 5. *Rom.* 12. 11. *Psal.* 119. 18. 112. *Isai.* 6. 2. 3. *Psal.* 103. 20. 21. *Matth.* 18, 10.

More of this kind might be added; but what is said, is sufficient, to manifest Prayer to be an indispensable duty, which truth we shall next make some improvement of.

C H A P. VI.

The greatness of the Sin of Neglect of Prayer manifested.

IN Order to the enforcing the practice of this duty, we shall here in the first place shew the greatness of the sin of the Neglect thereof, upon the grounds men-

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mentioned in the preceeding *Chapter*.

1. The Neglect and laying aside of this duty, is a sin condemned by the very light of nature: and such as are guilty thereof, sin against their own natural conscience; and are condemned therein by the very practice of heathens, who shall rise up against them, as witnesses to condemn and aggravate their ungodly practice or neglect in this. shall heathens, who hath stocks and stones, and the work of their own hands, for their gods, which neither hear nor see, nor breath. nor can help, *Psal.* 115 4. 5, 6, 7. and 135. 15, 16, 17 and pray notwithstanding unto them; and shall such as make profession of the true and living God, who can hear and help, refuse to do that unto him, which idolaters do unto their idols? and lay aside or slight this duty of Praying to, and of calling upon him? how shall such answer it in the great day?

2. The neglect and laying aside of this duty, is a peremptor and plain denial of that natural worship, which is due to God from man, as his creature and subject: and consequently a practical declaration, that we own him not for the Lord, nor for our Lord; that we acknowledge not our selves to be his creatures obliged to worship and glorifie him. And if we refuse to give unto God this piece of natural worship, what worship can we willingly perform unto him? and if we be not willing to worship God, what better are we than Devils? To deny him this natural worship, is in effect. to deny him to be God, or to refuse to acknowledge him as such.

3. To neglect and forsake this duty of prayer is as much as to say, in plain terms, we have no dependence upon the Lord; we are Lords our selves we will come no more unto him. So that much horrid Blasphemy is wrapped up in this evil; We hereby say, we are not creatures, we have no dependence upon God, we neither move, live, nor have our being in him. We are not beholden to him for any thing

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thing we have, whether as to our being, or as to our well-being; and so we will not acknowledge him therefore, nor pay him the least piece of homage, upon that account: we can live well enough without God, our Life is our own, and we are full masters thereof and of all that concern being or well-being. O! how deep doth this sin draw?

4 Hereby also we declare before angels and men, yea, and take the devils also witness, That we do not acknowledge God the author and fountain of any good we enjoy; we have all, and expect all from some other hand, and for all, we will not be beholden to some other, than to God. Is not this a dreadful evil? And yet it is a manifest consequent of the neglect of this duty: for nature and common sense will tell us, that he of whom we expect all, should be sought unto for all; and that he of whom we hold all, should be thankfully therefore acknowledged and praised.

5. By the neglect and laying aside of this duty, we declare, that we believe not God to be an omnipresent God, one near to us, not to be omniscient, acquainted with, and privy to our condition; nor Almighty, and able to help us in our necessities, and to supply our wants. If we believed that God were at hand, durst we refuse to commune with him, or speak to him with our souls? did we believe, that he knew all things that concerned us, better than we do ourselves; and were able to supply, by his almighty power, all our necessities: and that he alone were the omniscient, omnipresent, and Almighty God, would we not ply him more by Prayer and supplication; & look for all our supplies, helps, reliefs, deliveries, and up-makings from him alone? What an hainous Sin then must this be, which upon the matter, is a denying of God. or a making of him to be an idol, a blind ignorant and helpless thing? Such then as lay aside or neglect this duty, must be practical atheists; and hereby avow themselves such:

6. By the neglect of this duty of Prayer, we solemnly declare, that it is in vain to call upon God; for he heareth not, he is not a God that heareth Prayers; and then, I Pray, what difference will we put betwixt him and the gods of the nations, which are no gods, but dead stocks and stones; for they have ears, but hear not, as being dead lifeless things? Shall we thus blaspheme the living God, and be guiltless? Shall we thus preach-out to all, that know us, that either there is no God, or no God that can help us, nor that concerneth himself with what is done on earth; and consequently cannot be the true and living God.

7. By the neglect of this duty of Prayer, either we say, we have no need of, or care not for the great blessings of the new covenant; or that we can have them, and not be beholden to God for them; or that he will give them, tho' we think them not worth the asking, or Praying for. But all of these are gross and abominable to say, who, that hath not sold himself to the devil, and to all mischief, will dare to say, that he neither hath need of, nor careth for the blessings of the new covenant, purchased by Christ? who, that knoweth any thing of the gospel, dare think to say, that we can have any of these blessings, and not be beholden to God for them? and who that believeth God's word, will think or say, that we may have them, tho' we account them not worth the asking? Hath not the Lord told us, that he must be enquired of for these things, *Ezek. 36. 37.* and that we *have not, because we ask not, Jam: 4. 2.*

8. By the neglect of this duty of prayer, we either say, that Christ hath not consecrated a new and living way, for sinners to draw nigh unto God, that he hath not died, or that his death was in vain to procure us this access; or that tho' he thought the matter so much worth, as to lay down his life to purchase it; yet we put no value upon it; So that it is all one to us, whether Christ died for that end, or

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not ; we will not think it with the using, what he
thought worth his death and sufferings to purchase to
us. Who seeth not of what a deep dye this sin is ?
We hereby undervalue all Christ's love ; We say he
was too prodigal of his life, to purchase that unto
us, which we have no esteem for, nay, look upon
as our bondage and burden ; or we deny, that he made
any such purchase at all, contrary to all the gospel.
Such therefore as deny this duty, deny the whole
gospel.

9. Such as neglect or lay aside this duty, deny
Christ's being an intercessor, to make the Prayers of
his people acceptable, by presenting them with in-
cense in his censer ; or that he hath taken on that
office or imployment in vain ; For, as for their part
they mind not to imploy him, or to have any of their
Prayers rendered acceptable through his incense :
They will give God no Prayer at all.

10. Such deny all the works of redemption per-
formed by Christ, or think it not worth the giving
of him thanks for : And deny also his being God ;
for they will not worship him, nor Pray to him ; nor
pray to the father through him.

11. Such as neglect to lay aside this duty of Prayer
deny Christ to be the great prophet, who must in-
struct us in the way of life ; or say, that they have
no need of his instruction, or that they have no e-
steem for it, and can be well enough without it. They
will never cry for knowledge ; nor lift up their voice
for understanding : They will not seek for it, as for
silver ; nor search for it, as for hid treasures. They
will not wait at the posts of his door, for all that he
can give. O ! what undervaluers of spiritual favours
and blessings are such as neglect this dutie.

12. Who neglect this duty of Prayer do profess
they will not own and acknowledge Christ for king ;
For they will not worship him, as their Lord ; they
will not pay homage to him, as their king : they
will have nothing from him as king ; nor will they
ack

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acknowledge their subjection to him, and dependence upon him, as king; They will no ioyn in the song of the Lamb, nor proclaim him king of Saints, nor live under his protection, nay, they hereby declare themselves to be open enemies to Christ: For all must either be subject to him, or rebels against him: And who are subjects to him, must seek his protection and live under it, and own him as such, by paying him homage: And who will be enemies must resolve to hear that sad word at length, *Luke, 19. 27. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay before me.*

13. Who lay this duty aside, as they undervalue Christ's authority in commanding, and injoyning this duty; so they misregard all the encouragements, which he hath given to hearten us to this duty, either as not true, or as unworthy of our consideration; & so say, in effect, that either Christ spoke not truth, or was not wise enough to make use of the best and most forcible arguments to enforce the practice of the duty: For, as for them, they will be moved with no such thing, and particularly, when the promise of being heard, and of receiving what they ask, will not work them up to the duty of Prayer; they plainly declare that they know nothing they stand in need of from God, or that God can give them, which they value worth the wind of their mouth: And therefore to tell them, that if they will Pray, they shall be heard, and receive what they ask, is of no force with them; for they will receive nothing from him, they value nothing he can give, and therefore that shall never once move them to bow their knee, or open their mouth unto God.

14. Moreover, such as lay aside this duty, lay no weight upon the example of Christ, who himself was so much in the duty of Prayer, in the days of his flesh: They say they have less need of God, than Christ had; and therefore will not cry unto God, as he did. O! Horrid.

15. Such

15. Such as lay aside this duty, proclaim they have nothing to do with the spirit, as a spirit of grace & supplication; or deny that he is given and sent, or was promised for this end. No prayer can be made to God acceptably, that is not framed in the heart by the Spirit and supplications: and such, as lay aside this duty, profess they will not have the spirit for this end: and so deny or renounce any interest in God, Father, Son, and holy Ghost: and are content to live without all the three persons of the Trinity.

16. Hereby they declare, they never had the spirit dwelling in them, as the spirit of adoption; neither are desirous of him, for this end, to clear up and ascertain them of an interest in God, through Christ; They are satisfied with their natural state, and are content to live without God, or without all sense of his love and favour: the spirit is given for a spirit of adoption, and whosoever are possessed of him, as such, are made able and willing to cry to God, as their father, and to go to him, as children, with cheerfulness, delight, humility and filial confidence and boldness. But such as lay aside this duty & neglect it, do declare thereby, that this spirit is not in them, or is not acting in them, as the spirit of adoption.

17. Who neglect and lay by this duty, do willingly consent to the want of the help of the spirit, to cause us pray, and to pray in us, and cry in us, *Abba Father*: They make no account of this glorious assistance; they choose rather to be without it altogether. What contemners and undervaluers of the spirit of God must these be, who make so light of this matter: what desperate folly is it, willingly this to refuse the assistance of the spirit, and to put and keep themselves wholly out of a capacity of receiving the sweet influences of the spirit of Prayer, or of having the spirit actually helping their infirmities, and making intercession for them with groanings which cannot be uttered.

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18. Neglecters and layers aside of this duty of Prayer condemn and undervalue the access to the Father, which the Spirit's work is to help us unto; They look upon that access to the father as no worthy, or desirable privilege; and therefore they reject it they undervalue it, and will have none of it. The Spirit is given to help the Children to God, to draw nigh unto the Lord in Prayer; for by him, through Jesus we have access: But all the neglecters of this duty declare they will have none of the Spirit's assistance for this end; The small value they put upon the necessary means faith, they have little love, or esteem for the end.

19. Such as neglect this duty, not only declare themselves void of the graces of the Spirit of God; but also proclaim themselves unwilling to have these fruits of the Spirit in them, to qualify, enable, and prompt them to the exercise of this duty.

20. Who neglect to refuse to mind, and to go about this duty of Prayer, plainly declare, in so far, that they have no relation to God, as his children, nor are yet made partakers of the privilege of adoption: for an adopted child of God cannot be an enemy to this duty. Which is the breading of such a child, and the pouring out of his heart in the bosom of his Father. The Lord giveth to his children, because they are now adopted to be his children, the Spirit of his Son, whereby they cry *Abba Father*: Such therefore are not reconciled to this duty, cannot say, they are the children of God, and transfused unto the kingdom of his Son, because they have never received as yet the Spirit of his Son, which all do receive, whose relation is changed, and who are now brought into a state of Sonship. Yea, such as wholly lay aside this duty, declare and openly preach forth their undervaluing of this state of Sonship.

21. As also, they who lay aside this duty, and neglect Prayer, declare to all, that look on, that they are strangers unto that glorious change, which grace

make n

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make:h; and are yet in the old stock of nature, nor
transplanted into the kingdom of Christ, nor made
partakers of the new Man, or of the divine nature;
for this would necessarily incline them to this duty
of making their requests known unto God, in every
thing; This would turn their faces and their hearts
God-wards, and would cause them lift out their de-
sires unto him, in cries, in sighs, in groans or in
breathings, if they could do no more.

22. By Neglecting this duty, they declare them-
selves unworthy of that high honour and priviledge of
being priests unto the most High, being so unwilling
to offer up the sacrifices of Prayer and praise unto the
Lord, and the calves of their lips. Seeing they are
so averse from this duty, which is called for at their
hands, who are become a kingdom of Priests unto
God, and made priests through Christ, 1. *Pet.* 2.
5. *Revel.* 1. 6. How can they challenge an inter-
est in this priviledge, or share of the honour there-
of? Nay, hereby it would rather seem, they desire
to abide priests unto satan, and chief members of his
kingdom, and willing to lay out themselves for his
service.

23. Such as neglect this duty do plainly declare,
they are none of the People of God, as wanting the
Distinguishing note and character, whereby they are
known from others: The people of God are such
as call upon God. This is their work and special
employment; Here are they to be found; This is
their element, Here they live, and out of this they
cannot live: But, on the contrary, they discover
themselves to be of the number of those, whose cog-
nizance is, *They call not upon God*; This is the mark
of the wicked, they will not seek God. Is this be-
lieved? and dare any, who read this, profess them-
selves to be among the number of the wicked, by re-
fusing to call upon the name of God? is there so
much advantage to be had by being amongst them?

24. Such as neglect, or lay aside this duty declare,
they

66 *The sinfulness of Neglect of Prayer.* Chap. VI. they neither are, nor desire to be among the number of the servants of God : for this of calling upon God is a part of the service God requireth of them ; and who refuse to perform this piece of service unto him, do plainly declare, they love not his service, nor desire they to be exercised therein ; and are so far from looking upon it, as their honour and rich advantage, to be among his servants ; that they rather account it their burden ; And so plainly declare, they have more pleasure in the service of Satan, than in the service of God. O what a wretched disposition is this ? O what wickedness is wrapped up here, thus plainly to declare, we are wearied of God, and of his service, and therefore will not so much, as call upon him !

25. Who neglect and lay aside this duty, say, in effect, they are Lords, and will come no more unto God, they are rich and increased in goods, and have need of Nothing, as was the church of *Laodicea*. *Rev. 3.* They know no wants, or they see not the hazard of lying under these wants ; they are not careful to have them supplied ; and therefore they will not come to God for this end. They are senseless and feel no burdens pressing them, no burdens of sin and corruption, no burden of an evil heart of unbelief, that is always departing from the living God ; They take no list of duties ; and therefore they cry not for help. They have no difficulties, no dark steps in their way ; for they are not desirous of light ; and therefore they cry not to God, to enlighten their eyes, and to teach them in the way, wherein they ought to walk, and to lead them in sure paths, that their foot-steps slide not. They are not anxious about the matter, nor careful how matters go, This is the language of their refusing to practise this Duty.

26. Hereby they declare also, that they will not be in God's common, for their daily bread ; they will not seek it of him, nor depend on him for it ; and thus eat, and drink, and enjoy their life, and things

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 necessary thereunto, as the beasts do; as little acknowledging God therefore, as they do; yea, and as little depending on him by faith, and desiring grace to make a right use of what God is pleased to give, and to employ it for his honour, as if they were not rational creatures. Nay, the beasts in the way, seek their daily food from God. *The young lions seek their meat from God, Psal. 104. 21.* The beasts, and the fishes of the sea wait all upon God, that he may give them their meat in due season, *Verse. 27. and Psal. 145. 15. 16.* What a shame is it then for man, made a more noble creature, than the beasts, that perish, that he doth not, or will not, in his kind, by Prayer and supplications, seek his food, nourishment; and what he needeth for his outward life from God? And seeing Christ himself taught us to Pray, *Give us this day our daily bread,* That is, that we, waiting upon the providence of God, from day to day in the use of lawful means, may of his free gift, and as his fatherly will shall judge best, enjoy a competent portion of them, and have the same continued and blessed to us in our holy and comfortable use of them, and contentment in them, and be kept from all things, that are contrary to our temporal support and comfort, *Gen. 43. 12. 13. 14. and 28. 20 Eph. 4. 28. 2 Thes. 3, 11, 12. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Tim. 4. 2, 4, 5. 1 Tim. 6, 6, 7. 8. Prov 30. 8, 9.* How must such crooks and contradict all this, who lay aside the duty of Prayer? How do they declare, that they have not forfeited all right to these outward things notwithstanding of *Adam's* transgression; and that they have not deserved to be deprived of them, or to have them cursed to them; notwithstanding of what the scripture saith, *Gen. 2. 17. and 3. 17. Rom. 7, 20, 21, 22. Jer. 5. 25. Deut. 28. 15, to the end.*

How do they declare that these outward things are able of themselves even without God's blessing, to uphold nourish and sustain us? contrary to *Deut. 8.*

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5. How do they say, that they are worthy of them and that God cannot in justice withhold them, contrary to *Gen. 32, 10*? And that they by their own industrie, are able to procure them, contrary to *Deut 8, 17, 18*? How do they declare, that they are in no hazard of desiring, of getting, or of using them unlawfully, contrary to *Jer, 6, 13. Matth, 7, 21. 22. Hos, 2, 7. Jam, 4, 3.*

27. Moreover they declare, that far less they will depend on God, and wait on him, and seek from him, what is necessary for the life of their souls: And so either suppose, that they can have all that is necessary there unto, another way than from God; and therefore need not Pray to him for them; or that they are indifferent, whether they receive them, or not; and therefore will not be at so much pains as to seek them, as thinking them hardly worth so much labour & work

28. When they neglect or lay aside this duty, they in like manner declare, that either they are free of sin original and actual; or that they can fully satisfy God's justice, for any offence they have done; contrary to *Rom. 3, 9. to 22. Matth. 18, 24, 25. P'sal. 130, 3, 4. Rom. 5, 12. Luke. 17, 10.* And therefore need not trouble themselves to seek pardon and forgiveness from God, through Jesus Christ, contrary to *Rom. 3, 24, 25, 26. Heb. 9, 22. Eph 1, 6, 7. 2 Pet. 1, 2. Hos. 14, 2. Jer. 14, 7.* And notwithstanding that Christ hath taught us to Pray daily, *Forgive us our trespasses. as we forgive them that trespass against us.*

29. By neglecting and laying aside of this duty of Prayer, they declare, that either they are in no hazard of being led aside, and drawn away with the wickedness of their own hearts, with the power of the flesh, and body of death, or with the flight of satan, or with the enticements and snares of the world, contrary to *Jam 1, 14. Gal. 5, 17. Mark, 4, 19. 2 Chron, 32, 31. 1 Chron. 21, 1. Luke. 21, 34. Matth. 26, 31, 69, 70, 71, 72. Gal. 2, 1,*

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 to 15. 2 *Chron.* 18, 3. with 1 *Chron.* 9, 2. Or 2.
 that they are able enough of themselves to resist all
 these temptations and overcome them, contrary to
Rom. 7. 23, 24. 1 *Chron.* 21, 1, 2, 3, 4. 2.
Chron. 16. 7, 8, 9, 10. For they will not Pray,
That the Lord would not lead them into temptation, but
deliver them from evil. ; That is, That he would so
 over-rule the world, and all it, so subdue the flesh,
 and restrain satan, and so order all things, and stren-
 gthen, and quicken them, that they either may be
 kept from being tempted to sin or, if tempted, may
 be by his grace and spirit supported, and enabled to
 stand in the hour of temptation, or when fallen. rais-
 ed up again. *Joh.* 17. 15. *Psal.* 51. 10, and 119.
 133. 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. 8. 1 *Cor.* 10. 12, 13.
Heb. 13, 20. 21. *Matth.* 26. 11. *Psal.* 19. 13.
Eph. 3. 14, 15. 16, 17. 1 *Thess.* 3, 13. *Jude.* ver
 24. *Psal.* 51. 12. Or they hereby declare, they ac-
 count not the mercy of being delivered from tempta-
 tions, and from the power of satan, so great a good,
 as once to bow their knee unto the Father of our
 Lord Jesus Christ therefore, and beg by Prayer and
 supplication, that grace of him through Jesus.

30. Such as lay aside the duty of Prayer, do in plain
 terms say, that they have no need of God's help, light
 counsel, and direction, in any of their lawful con-
 cerns and affairs in the world, contrary to what we
 see in the servant of *Abraham*, when he was going
 to seek a wife to *Isaac* ; but are able enough of them-
 selves to manage all sufficiently : otherwise they
 would see themselves called to go to him by Prayer,
 and make their requests known unto him, to the end
 they might receive his blessing, countenance, direc-
 tion and gracious leading, whereby they might be e-
 nabled to do all to his glory, which they are called to
 do, by vertue of their places, stations, callings and
 relations in the world.

31 When they lay aside this duty, They declare that
 either God is not concerned in any affliction, distress

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trouble, or cross outward or inward, that lieth upon them, as having no hand therein; but all things fall out by chance, and fortune; and so deny God and his universal providence; or they declare, That they can wrestle against the evil of these, and stand under them, without his grace and help; and so can without God make a right and sanctified improvement of all: Otherwise if they believed, That God did over-rule, and order all these exercises, and disposed of them, as he thought good; and that they without his grace and assistance could not stand under them, as become christians to do, or make a right use of them; they would be more on their knees in such a day, and call more upon God, in the day of trouble, as believing that he only could remove the same, or strengthen them under it, and give the sanctified improvement of it.

32. When they lay aside this duty of Prayer, they declare their open contempt and undervaluing of all the great and special blessings of the new covenant, purchased by Jesus Christ; for, as was cleared, these are given to Praying persons; and for these will the Lord be enquired, *Ezek. 36. 37.* He giveth the spirit to them that ask him. *Luke. 11. 13.* They think not these worth the seeking, they are well without them, and they desire to remain so.

33. Such as neglect or lay aside this duty of Prayer trample under foot the manifold commands of God and violate his express laws, given both in nature, & in the word; both his laws for the duty itself, and for the right manner of going about it. All these are rejected with contempt, and the authority of the one supreme lawgiver, who alone is able to save, and to destroy, is despised and trode under foot. Such persons declare, they value not the law and frequently reiterated commands of God; they will follow their mind, and do their own will, let God enjoin the contrary, as he will: And thus they state themselves as open enemies and rebels to the Lord.

34. As likewise they lay no weight upon all the registred examples of other holymen of God, who have minded this duty, and have taken delight therein, and experienced the good and rich advantage thereof: but, on the contrary, condemn them for fools, for troubling themselves about such needless work; beside the rejecting of the obligation, that such examples, set before us for imitation and encouragement, do lay upon us to follow them, as followers of God and of Christ.

35. Who neglect and lay aside Prayer, deny the common duty of nature and christianity, to all round about them. They declare themselves unworthy to live under magistrates, and to enjoy the benefit of government, *feeling they will not Pray for all those in authority, that they may lead a quiet and peaceable life under them, in all godliness and honesty, 1 Tim. 2. 2.* They shew themselves unworthy of the benefit of the ministry, who will not pray for ministers. They neglect one piece of their duty to their masters of children, of parents or servants and family, who will not pray for them. They carry undutifully and unbrotherly to their equals, who will not lend them a lift by Prayer, and help them by falling on their own knees before God for them. They deal ungratefully to the good, who forget not them, in rewarding them thus, by refusing to pray for them. So they deal unchristianly with their enemies, who will not at once Pray for them, or help them out of their misery with one supplication to God, in their behalf.

36. Who neglect and lay aside this duty of Prayer, renounce all communion with God, and say, They are content to live in the world, without God, and without Christ, without all fellowship with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ. O! what an honour and honourable advantage are they satisfied to live without, who can live without a communion with God? What a miserable case would we judge that man to be in, who had not one bosom friend in

all the world, unto whom he might open all his heart, and make known all his mind? But how much worse case must he be in, who hath not God as his near friend, yea, who wilfully and deliberately refuseth fellowship with God, and will not keep up correspondence with him, and open his heart before him, and make all his desires known unto him? Now such are they, who lay aside Prayer, and will not call upon God.

37. Such as lay aside this duty, do openly declare. They will not subject themselves unto the holy will of God, in one thing or other, they will not study conformity unto any of his commandments; or they must suppose, That let God command what he will and enjoyn never so spiritual and difficult duties, they are able to give obedience without any divine aid and assistance; for they will not go to God by Prayer, to seek his helping hand, they will not pray to him for grace and influence to enable them for the duty, or to make them willing and ready to offer obedience or for grace and strength to carry them through.

38. Such declare themselves to be rather enemies unto the kingdom of Christ, than friends and well-wishers to the coming thereof: for they will not pray for the same: they will not pray for grace, to themselves and others, whereby they may be brought into the kingdom of Christ; They will not pray for *Jews* or *Gentiles*, nor pray for a blessing on the ordinances of Christ; they will not Pray, that Christ would take his great power to him and reign, and that all his enemies may be made his foot-stool that the kingdom of satan, and of antichrist his Lieutenant, may be brought down, and the work of reformation prosper through the world.

39. Such likewise declare openly. That they are little concerned with the glory of God in the world; and that it is all one to them, whether he be honoured or dishonoured, whether he get service or disservice whether his name be hallowed or prophaned: for
they

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they will not pray against these evils, that dishonour
the holy name of God; They will not pray, that
God would take them out of the way, and order all
matters so, as he may be more known, feared, lo-
ved, served, trusted-in, and worshipped in the world,
than he is; They will not Pray, That the know-
ledge of the glory of the Lord may fill the earth, as
the waters cover the sea, *Isai.* 11. 9. *Heb.* 2. 14.

40. *Lastly,* Such as mind not this duty, but whol-
ly lay it aside, declare themselves indifferent, how
God be served in the world, and how his will be done;
whether all remain rebels, or become subjects to him,
is all one to them; for they will not once pray,
That God's will may be done in earth, as it is done
by the Angels in heaven.

By these particulars we may see, what an hainous
sin it is, to neglect or lay aside this duty; and how
guilty they are before the Lord, who mind it not,
as a duty, and make no conscience to perform the
same: And by what is said, the practise of this duty
is enforced; and what remaineth to be spoken to of
the advantages thereof, and encouragements there-
unto, will more conveniently fall under considera-
tion afterward.

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The Unregenerate are obliged to Pray.

ERe we proceed, we shall speak a few words un-
to some cases, touching the practise of this du-
ty of Prayer:

And *first*, Answer to this question, Whether such
as are unregenerate, living in nature, are called unto
the practise of this duty of Prayer: Some suppose,
That this is only the duty of children; and that there-
fore all others are free of the obligation: But this sup-
posal

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posel is founded upon loose and sandy grounds; as
shall be shown in the examination thereof.

We affirm, that even unregenerate persons are
under an obligation to Pray: For which we give
these reasons.

1. All men are obliged to perform natural worship
unto God; and therefore are obliged to pray, which
is a part of natural worship. The law of nature ob-
ligeth such as are yet in nature, unto all the duties
thereof. But Prayer is enjoined by the very law of na-
ture, as we saw above: Unregenerate Persons are
obliged to all the duties required in the moral law, &
particularly in the First precept thereof; and con-
sequently are obliged to know and acknowledge him
to be the only true God, and to declare the same by
Praying unto him. 12

2. If they be not bound, to glorifie and worship
God by Prayer and supplication, then also it may be
said they are not bound to think or meditate on
God, or esteem honour and adore him; nor to chooſe
love, fear, or desire him; nor to believe, delight, hope
trust, or rejoyce in him: For all these are parts of
that natural homage, which the moral and natural
law require of man, of one as well as of another; And
if their unregenerate condition exeem them from one
duty of nature, why will it not also exeem them from
others, and from all? And if these duties be required,
they will enforce the duty of prayer, as is manifest.

3. If the light of nature, and a natural conscience
teach heathens, and impress this duty of prayer upon
them in a strait, and as it were constrain them to call
upon God, as we see it did the sea-men, with whom
Jonah sailed, *Jon.* 1. 3. And as it is said, *Psal.*
107. 28. Then this duty must ly upon all persons,
even upon the unregenerate as well as upon others.

4. In all the commands of scripture, enjoying
this duty, there is no exception made of unregene-
rate persons, as if they were not obliged, as well as
others: And where the law maketh no exceptions,
we ought to make none.

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5. If Prayer to God be not a duty, required of natural and unregenerate Persons, the omission and neglect thereof cannot be their sin. for sin is the transgression of a law, and where there is no law, there is no transgression, 1 *Joh.* 3. 4. *Rom.* 4. 15. Nor is Sin imputed, Where there is no law, *Rom.* 5. 13. Wherefore unregenerate persons, if not obliged by the law of God to pray, are not guilty for not praying, neither can that sin be imputed unto them, or they punished therefore; and yet we read of a sentence gone out against them, *Psal.* 79. 6. and *Jer.* 10. 25. *Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen, that know thee not, and on the families that call not on thy Name,*

6. It is laid to the charge of heathens, without the church (and much more will it be charged on natural persons within the church, because of the greater light of information, and of the more engagements & obligations) that *when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful*, *Rom.* 1. 21. Now this glorifying of God, as God, and being thankful, includeth Prayer, as is manifest: and therefore the neglect of this was their guilt also.

7. *Paul's* doctrine to the superstitious *Athenians*, worshipped they knew not what, having an altar erected to the UNKNOWN GOD, *Acts.* 17. 26 27. Confirmeth this; for he here tells them, That *God had made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell in all the face of the earth: and had determined the times afore appointed, and the bounds of their habitation:* For what end was this? that (saith he) *they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him:* This seeking of the Lord, if haply they might find him, was their duty, and that, which the consideration of God's works of creation and providence, called them unto; and none will question but this did include the duty of Prayer.

8. All, who are to acknowledge and profess God to be their creator, and preserver, and that in him alone

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one, they live move, and have their being, are bound to testify this by Prayer to him alone for their life; preservation & all the favours they need for upholding their life, as also to express their thankfulness to him for favours received: But sure, unregenerate persons are, to profess & acknowledge God alone to be their creator & preserver; Therefore they are also bound to pray to him.

9. Unregenerate persons are called to use means, whereby they may be brought out of that natural state and therefore are to pray for the spirit, to convince them and convert them; why else did the Lord say, after he had made large promises of the new heart, & of the new spirit, *Ezek. 36. 25. 26.* That yet he would be enquired of the house of *Israel*, to do these things for them, *Verse. 37.*

10. If unregenerate persons may not Pray for themselves, they may not join with others praying for them whether in private, or in public; and then they are not to join whether in family or in a church, or in any other company, in Prayer: And thus they shall never hear Prayer; but must remove out of the church, family, or company, when the rest are about to pray the consequence I suppose, is undeniable: for if they may not pray alone, how may they join with others in Prayer?

11. All the petitions of the Lords prayer are such, as say, unregenerate persons may present them unto God, they, as well as others, should wish and pray for the *Hallowing of God's name*, that the Lord in all things whereby he maketh himself known, may be glorified, praised and exalted; that he would fit, qualify and enable them and others, to glorify the Lord, in all their ways words and thoughts, and to deliver them from every course, that is dishonourable to God. They, as well as others are concerned in the *Coming of God's kingdom*; and bound to pray, that they & others may be delivered out of the kingdom of satan; that the ordinances of life may be blessed, for their own & others benefit, &c. They, as well as others are

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to desire, *That Gods will may be done on earth, as it is
done in heaven*; that they and others may be enabled
by grace to do the will of God, and to conform
themselves to all his holy appointment and determi-
nations; and to acquiesce unto all his wise and ho-
ly dispensations. They as well as others, have need
of their daily bread; and therefore must depend up-
on God for the same, and seek it by prayer from him,
They as well as others, sin daily against the Lord, &
have need of, and must seek pardon thereof from
God. They as well as others are subject to tempta-
tions, and to the assaults of satan; and therefore must
Pray, that either God would preserve them from these
evils, or keep them from being destroyed thereby.
So that these heads of petitions concerns them no less
than others; and Christ doth hereby manifestly say,
that all unregenerate persons are bound to present
these petitions unto God, as well as others. seeing
they concern them, no less than others. And sure,
if our Lord had thought, that prayer was not a duty
incumbent to unregenerate Persons, but was only
called for from the hands of the regenerate; he would
to have framed the petitions, as that it might mani-
festly have appeared, that they were petitions that
none but the regenerate could present unto God. But
seeing he hath been pleased to frame them so; as to
suit the case and condition of the unregenerate, as well
as of the regenerate, what needeth further debate con-
cerning this matter? Beside, Christ taught Judas
as well as the rest.

12. If unregenerate Persons be not obliged to pray
unto God, they are not obliged to acknowledge God
in all their ways, or to seek to be guided of him, in
ways approved of him, and be led in right paths: And
if they be free of this obligation, they do not sin, in liv-
ing without God in the world: Which cannot be said.

13. Sin doth not loose our obligation to duties,
unto which the law of nature did oblige us, before
sin entered into the world: Therefore it doth not
loose

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loose us from the obligation to Prayer, which was a
natural duty, required before the fall, in testimony
of Man's creature state, and dependence upon God.

14. If unregenerate persons be not obliged to pray
then be their outward distress, affliction, misery, tor-
ment, poverty, &c. What they will they must not
once say, *Lord help and pity me*; nor cry unto God
for relief, contrary to *Psal.* 107. 6. 13. 19. 28.

15. If the Lord hear the Prayers of unregenerate
persons, then sure, he encourageth them to pray; and
if he encourage them to pray, he all weth them to
pray: Now the Lord sometimes is pleased, to hear
the Prayers of natural unregenerate persons; as in
the forecited *Psal.* 107. 6, 13. 14. 19. 20. 28. 29.
There is no ground to think, that all these there spo-
ken of were only regenerate persons; for it is said of
them, *Vers.* 11. *That they rebelled against the word
of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High:*
And *Ver.* 17. *That they were fools afflicted because
of their transgression, and because of their iniquities.*
Nor may we suppose, that all that go down to the
sea in ships, *Verse,* 23. are regenerate. See likewise
Exod. 22. 22. 23. 27. It is said also, that God he-
ard the voice of the Lad *Ishmael.* *Gen.* 21. 17. Doth
not the Lord hear an unregenerate minister, in behalf
of the elect in the flock, over which he is set? See
Exod. 6. 5. *Psal.* 78. 34. 36. 37. 2 *Kings.*
13. 4.

16. *Peter* advised *Simon Magus* though in the gall
of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, to pray
God, if perhaps the thoughts of his heart might be
forgiven him. *Acts.* 3. 22. Which he never would
have done, if Prayer were not the duty of unregene-
rate persons.

17. God's threatnings and denunciations of wrath
and judgment upon unregenerate persons, have the
voice of a call in them, to such to pray, and to cry
mightily unto God: As we see the king of *Nineveh*
understood the language of the threatnings of the ruin
of

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of the city by *Jonah*. when he and his nobles made
a decree, and published it, ordaining all the inhabi-
tants to fast and cry mightily unto God *Jonah*, 3.
7. 8.

18. The Lord chargeth it home upon a sinful peo-
ple. *Hos.* 7. 14. That they did not pray unto him,
saying, *They have not cried unto me with their hearts*
when they howled upon their beds. This was therefore
questionless their duty : See *Psal.* 14. 4. *Jer.* 10
21. *Zeph.* 1. 6. *Job.* 27. 10.

19. If unregenerate persons may not pray for them-
selves, neither may they pray for others : what then
shall unregenerate ministers do ? we may not say,
such are no ministers, and all their ministerial acts ;
are null ; for if to Christ had never imployed *Judas*
in the ministry, and had given certain infallible rules
whereby to have discerned unregenerate persons from
others, that so none unregenerate might have been
admitted to the office of the ministry.

20. This shall make way for the cruciating of the
minds of God's own children ; for if it be once laid
down for a ground, that no unregenerate person may
Pray, what shall they do, when in the dark, as to
their estate, when the Lord hideth his face from them,
satan with his temptations assault them, and they see
no ground, whereupon to inter, That they are in
the state of grace ? Must they in that case forbear
Prayer ? or must they Pray, though they see no-
thing else, than that they are unregenerate ? How
can they do this, if that ground stand, that unregene-
rate persons should not pray ?

21. *Daniel* confesse hit, as the sin of the people,
That they did not Pray unto God, *Dan.* 9. 13.
And he restricteth not this to regenerate persons only
as if it had been the sin of none else ; but he speaketh
of the body and bulk of the people.

22. It is mentioned as a *Stigma* of the wicked, as
a mark of them, to their ignominy and disgrace, that
they do not call upon God, *Psal.* 10. 4. *The wick-*

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ed through the pride, of his countenance will not seek after God, God is not in all his thoughts, or, in any of his thoughts, as the words may rather be read, They are said, *Psal. 14. 4. To eat up God's people, as they eat bread:* And it is added, *They call not upon God.* Hear how Job describeth them, *Job. 21. 14. They say unto God, depart from us: for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways; What is the almighty, that we should serve him; and what profit should we have, if we Pray unto him?* It must therefore be both their sin and shame, that they speak and act thus; and it so, the contrary must have been their duty.

23. Whatever talents or gifts, the Lord bestow upon any, these should be employed and made use of for him, and his glory, *Matth. 25. 30.* But there is a gift of prayer, as well as of other things; as is manifest: Therefore this should be used for God and his Glory, whether the person gifted herewith, be a magistrate or minister, or the master of a family, or a private person.

24. If it were not a duty required of unregenerate persons to Pray unto God, why did the *Psalmist* Pray, *Psal. 83. 16. That God would so fill the faces of the enemies of the church with shame, that they might seek God's name?*

These may serve for confirming of this truth, let us next see what can be said against it.

Object. 1. Christ, in that pattern of Prayer teacheth us, That Prayer is only a duty required of them, who can speak to God, as their Father; when he teacheth us to say, *Our Father:* But unregenerate persons, not being the adopted sons of God, cannot call God Father. in truth. *Ans,* When Christ prescribed this pattern unto his disciples, he made no exceptions of *Judas* tho' he was not made partakers of the spirit of adoption: And therefore we may suppose, that in some sense even *Judas* might have called God, Father, in truth, tho' not in that strict sense, that the truly adopted may. As God was God
un-

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unto the whole body of the people of *Israel*, & their
God by covenant, tho' not in the strict sense, as he
was the God of the true *Israel*; so was he a Father
unto all that people: and upon that account, they
might have called him so, and have prayed unto him
as their Father, by covenant relation: and so may
unregenerate persons, who are now within the visi-
ble church, call God their Father, and their God by
virtue of that outward relation they have unto him,
& externally in covenant with him, and as his avou-
d and professed subjects and servants, tho' not in
a strict and most proper sense, but the truly con-
verted and regenerate may. See *Mat h.* 23. 1. 9.
and 5, 16. 45. and 6, 8. 4. *Mal* 4, 6. And more-
over, as all are bound to believe in God, the Father
Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; so they may
call him Father, upon the account of creation, and
their Father, being their creator and upholder,
and Pray unto him as such. And thus may and
should all heathens do: For God is the Father of
whom are all things, 1 *Cor.* 8, 6. He is one God, &
Father of all, *Eph.* 4, 6.

Object 2. It is expressly said, *Prov.* 28, 9. That
he that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, e-
ven his Prayer is an abomination. *Ans.* So it is ex-
pressly said, *Prov.* 15, 8. That *the sacrifice of the*
wicked is an abomination to the Lord; and yet he
is here and elsewhere. *Prov.* 21, 27. *Amos* 3, 22
Sai. 1, 11. and 66, 3. *Jer.* 6, 20. and 7, 22. The
Lord sheweth how displeased he is with the hypocri-
tical and un sincere way of their offering of sacrifice;
and none will hence, I suppose, infer that it was not
a commanded duty, laying even upon unregenerate
persons, under the law, to offer sacrifices. So it is
expressly said, *Prov.* 15, 9. That *the way of the*
wicked is an abomination to the Lord: Will it there-
fore follow, that a wicked and unregenerate person
may perform no duty, of any relation he stands in,
natural, civil or politick? May he perform no duty
F of

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of a magistrate, husband, father and master ; or of a
subject, wife, child and servant ? This would de-
stroy all humanity, and all society, yea, and all re-
lations. Further, it is as expressly said, *Prov. 21. 4.*
That the plowing of the wicked is sin : Must we hence
infer. That therefore we must not till the ground,
or labour in their ordinary and lawful callings ? Then
may we also infer, that they must not eat, drink, or
sleep ; because *to the Unbelieving nothing is pure, Tit*
1. 15. But in all these things we must distinguish
betwixt the substance of the work and duty, which
may be and is good, lawful, commanded and neces-
sary ; and other things that are accidental, in the man-
ner of performing the same, by reason of which, what
is in itself necessary ; and useful, may become to
them sinful and abominable in the eyes of the
Lord.

Object. 3. Seeing the scripture enjoineth, that such
as Pray, should pray in faith ; how can they pray,
who have not faith ? *Ans.* If by faith here be mean-
ed the faith of being heard, and of receiving an an-
swer ; many regenerate ones may many times judge
themselves excoemed from this duty, as not daring
confidently to say, they believe to be heard, and some
unregenerate may believe, as did the nine lepers, *Luk.*
17. 12. 17. If by faith be meant, a true and sav-
ing faith, it will as well follow, that unregenerate
Persons may not hear the word preached, or read, be-
cause that should also be done with faith : But if by
faith here be meant a grounded assurance of their be-
ing about a lawful and commanded duty, when pray-
ing, as the word seemeth to be taken. *Rom 14. 23.*
Unregenerate persons may pray thus in faith. But
beside faith we grant there are many other things re-
quired unto the right and acceptable manner of per-
forming this and other duties : Yet we say, the want
of such qualifications as are requisite unto the accept-
able manner of doing duties, will not loose us from

the obligation to the substance of the duty. We are to eat and drink to the glory of God, 1 Cor. 10. 31. But hence it will not follow, That we are not to eat at all, but when in case to do it, to the glory of God: we are both commanded to eat, and to eat to the glory of God: and the disobedience given to the law, given in order to the manner, will not exeeem from obedience to the law, as to the substance of the command.

Object. 4. *David* Prayeth, *Psal.* 109. 7. That their prayers may become sin. *Ans.* True, yet hereby he supposeth, That such might, and would pray; otherwise he needed not to imprecate this unto them; and that their Prayer might become sin: And indeed as to all the enemies of Christ, (of whom these and the like passages are principally to be understood) their Prayers shall become sin to them: that is all their prayers shall not avail them for obtaining of mercy; but shall rather aggravate their guilt: but hence we cannot infer, That unregenerate persons are exeeemed from the duty of Prayer altogether

C H A P. VIII.

The Necessity and Usefulness of Family-prayer manifested.

THere are (as is known) various kinds of species of Prayer or be diverse ways how this duty may and should be performed; as publick Prayers in the church, private and solitary Prayers, performed by each alone in their retirements and closets: And these are either more solemn, whether ordinary or extraordinary and occasional, or ejaculatory, whether mental or vocal: Of all which little or no doubt is made, either of the lawfulness, or necessity of them, howbeit they be but too much neglected by one and

ther. But as to family-Prayer, that is, prayer performed by a family, as such, unto God; as it is too too much neglected and laid aside; so many are ready to plead the non-necessity thereof, and look on it as a piece of unnecessary, if not unrequired, devotion; or at least satisfy themselves with this, That seeing it is not expressly required, They may safely omit it, and it may be looked upon, as a thing indifferent, and so be performed, or not performed; as they think good. In order therefore to the setting forward of this piece of religion, we shall show, that the same is a duty, required in the law of God. And consequently is necessary by reason of the command, and cannot be ordinarily omitted without sin. And *next* shall mention some thing of its usefulness, or of the profit, that is to be had thereby, and of the hurt and damage, that attendeth the neglect thereof.

As to the *first* of these, many things might be mentioned to clear up the duty, and to make it manifest to be commanded of the Lord, we shall name a few :
As,

1, All societies as such, should be societies for God intending his glory and honour, and laying out themselves for celebrating his praises, that he may be exalted in the world, and his Name made great : Families, as such, are societies; and therefore they should; as families, advance the glory of God, by Prayer and praises. That God is to be worshipped by many together, by companies of men and women, and by societies, none will deny, seeing churches are societies, and seeing all societies, fixed or occasional, should be godly; and holy societies, that God may be glorified in and by them; none can, with any shew of reason, say, that this is not required of families, the the first and most stated, and fixed societies, that are. God having made man a sociable creature, requireth service of him, and honour of him, as such; and man in that capacity is bound to glorify his creator, and to worship him, and serve him, in all companies
and

and societies he cometh into, and much more must he do this in family-society, which is not an uncertain or occasional society; but fixed and stated; and wherein he hath more fit occasion and opportunity, and that more frequently, even daily to celebrate the praises of God, and to keep fellowship and communion with him by Prayer and Supplication.

2. If members of distinct families, occasionally meeting together, and acted by a principle of godliness have thought it their duty, to celebrate the praises of God, and to acknowledge their dependence upon him, by Prayer, as occasion required; as we see by their practice they did, *Acts*, 1. 14. & 2. 42. & 4. 31 & 12. 12. and 20. 36. *Matth.* 18. 28. *Jam.* 5. 15. 16. Then certainly the members of one and the same family, having always more ready occasions to meet together, and having the same moving causes, or occasions calling for Prayer, and the same obligations to celebrate God's praises and to acknowledge their dependence upon God alone, for all they need, should much more think it their duty, and of concernment, to mind this work, whether it be upon a more publick, or upon a more private occasion, especially seeing they can get it done with more conveniency, and less distraction.

3. If we consider what relation families have to God we will see, and cannot but read their engagement unto this duty. The Lord is supreme Lord author and instituter of families, or of family-societies, he is their preserver, nourisher and protector; for all are of him, *Rom.* 11. 36. And all blessings are from him, *Jam.* 1. 17. He is the Father of all. *Eph.* 4. 6. And if so, doth not reason and nature require, that this should be acknowledged by families, as such by praise and thanksgiving; and that they should live, as professing their owning of him for their Lord, their supreme governour, their preserver, yea, and their Father, by worshipping him, and Praying to him, *Mal.* 4. 6.

4. Seeing God hath made all things for his own glory, and disposed of all things for the same; and seeing he hath appointed families, family-societies & relations, that he may be glorified thereby: And seeing flocks of birds and beasts do preach forth the glory of God's wisdom and goodness, in their kind: why should not flocks of men; who are rational creatures, created to gather in the rent from all the world, and to sing and set forth the praises of the Lord in a more articulate and rational manner, praise the Lord, after their kind? And why should not families, as little flocks, more constantly associated together, having their hearts and affections more united, and all things more on, than others, set up the worship of God, that they may sing his praises together, and learn of the birds, which sing more cheerfully when together, than when scattered asunder.

5. The dim light of nature taught heathens to think on this duty; Wherefore they in their idolatrous and superstitious manner, had their household gods, their *Lares* and *Penates*, and their household services and sacrifices, as knowing, that as God was to preserve and do good to families, and as families stood in need of favour and blessings from God; so should they, as families knit together, in that relation, pay him due homage, and openly acknowledge their subjection to, and dependence upon him: And shall the light of nature teach the blind heathens this, and shall they in their superstitious way, follow it; and shall christians who have the light of the word, and thereby all their duty laid out before them in plain & distinct terms, and enforced with more pungent and perspicuous reasons, be strangers unto this duty? How shall heathens rise up in judgment, and condemn such ungodly families, who carry towards God, as if He were not the God of their family, nor bestowed favours upon it, nor did not concern himself with what were done in families, and as if their families could subsist without him; and do not recognise his Sovereignty

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veraignity, his power, his goodness, and dominion over them; do perform no homage, or token of subjection unto him, nor do pay him service as their King and LORD?

6. The very light and law of nature teacheth, that every one is obliged in his station, and relation in a world, according to his power, to set forth the glory of God, to celebrate his name and attributes, to proclaim him to be God over all the earth, and to be their God, even as standing in such a relation, and in such a station in the world. The light of nature taught the king of *Nineve*, to put his family and whole city to that duty, which the present dispensation, the sad and terrible threatning of ruine, did call for, that is, to fasting and prayer, and to cry mightily unto God, If possibly they might be spared: And will not the same light, now more clearly shining forth in the scriptures, teach fathers and masters of families, to lay out themselves in their stations and capacities, for advancing God's glory, according to the power that they have: and so to call all under them, or within the family, together, to cry unto the Lord with one mouth, heart and voice, both at ordinary and at extraordinary seasons; and to bless him for mercies and favours received; and so to set up Family-Prayers, and family-praises? See *Mal.* i. 6.

7. Doth not Christianity teach, That masters of families should devote their families unto God, consecrate them for his service, go before them, for this end, in a good example; and call them together for concurring in the more solemn service of God, that all of them together might offer themselves unto God, and to his service, and for this end seek his counsel and advice, his blessing and acceptance, his helping and leading hand, that they may serve him acceptably, in all holiness and fear, and walk before him in his fear and love? What else is imported by the Lord's appointing his people under the law, to de-

dedicate their houses, *Deut.* 20. 5. According to which we have *David's* Prayer at the dedication of his house. *Psal.* 30. Title.

8. The neglect of this duty of family worship, is inconsistent with that love to God, and to his glory, which is called for from the hands of one and other. How can parents or masters of families evidence it, that they love the Lord with all their heart, soul and Strength, when they do not lay forth themselves; in their domestick capacity, to bring all under them with them, that they may exalt the Lord together? We find the *Psalmist* zealously inviting all, even inanimate creatures, to concur with him, in setting forth the praises of God, as *Psal.* 69, 34. and 106. 1. 48. and 111. 1. and 112. 1. and 113. 1. 9. and 115. 18. and 116. 19. and 117. 2. and 135. 1. and 140. 1. 10. and 147. 20. and 148. 2. 3, 4. and elsewhere. thereby manifesting the great and vehement desire he had to have the name of the Lord made great; And therefore seeing how excellent the Lord was, and how little all that he could do, would signify to the exalting of him, who was above all praises; he sought help of angels and men, yea, and of birds and beasts, of sea and dry land; of all creatures rational and irrational, animate and inanimate: but now, where is their zeal for the Lord of Hosts, and their ardent affection for him, and strong desire to have him set on High, who will not call their own children, and their own family to help them, or to concur with them, in celebrating the virtues and praises of God? How ashamed must such be of their neglect, when they read such *Apostrophe's* such invitations and calls to all creatures to concur in this Work?

9. We find the Lord careful by his instructions & commands to have families kept in a godly order and walk, each in reference to other, in their mutual relations and duties; therefore are the duties of the husband, in reference to his wife, and of the wife in reference

ference to her husband; the duties of the parents in reference to their children, and of children again in reference to their parents; The duties of masters in reference to their servants, and of servants again in reference to their masters, so particularly and so frequently inculcated, as we see in *Paul's* epistles; beside the special command, *Deut. 6. 6. 7.* Now what should all this import, but that the Lord would have families, as temples for him to dwell in, or as churches, fit for glorifying of him, that he might delight to dwell among them: And should not all his temples or churches be houses of praises and of Prayers to him? And farther do not all these family and mutual duties, call for divine help and grace, for the right discharge of them; and should not family prayer be made use of, for this End? Is not Family-prayer a futeable mean to get grace, for performance of Family duties? And seeing the duties ly upon all the members of the Family, in order to one another. Reason requireth, that all should concur in one body, for lifting up a Prayer for grace and assistance, that each may be helped to perform his duty to other, they to others, and others to God; that so God may be glorified by all.

10. In the primitive time of the world, untill the days of *Enos. Gen. 4. Last*, all the publick and solemn worship, that God got, was in families; and after that, Men began in a more solemn and publick way, to call upon the name of the Lord, as is there said; we have no ground to think, that this primitive domestick worship was quite laid aside by the holy patriarchs: for we find several plain vestiges thereof remaining, as in *Enoch's* family; for of him it is said, *Gen. 5. 22. He walked with God, after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.* And his walking with God, as master of a family, cannot well consist with the neglect of family-worship; which is a special point of walking, and of keeping communion with God. So of *Noah* it is said

said, *Gen*, 6. 9. *That he was a just man, and perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God:* And this when all the rest of the world had corrupted their ways, *and the imagination of the thoughts of their heart, was only evil continually,* Verse 5. Shall we then suppose, that *Noah's* family was as void of worship, as all the rest of the families of the world? How is this consistent with his being a just man, and a perfect man; and (as *Peter* saith *2 Pet.* 2. 5.) a preacher of righteousness? Of *Abraham* we hear, That he was the friend of God, and so no doubt kept family-familiarity with him: And when he went with his son *Isaac* towards the mount, pointed forth to him by the Lord, he told his servants, that he and the lad would go and worship, *Gen.* 22. 5. Intimating that his worshipping with his family, or with part of them, was no strange thing to him; otherwise his servants should not well have understood what he meant. So the Lord said of him, *Gen.* 18. 19: *I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, &c.* Pointing forth what a godly master of a family he was, and would be: And shall we think, that all this instruction and injunction would be without Prayer? Was not this a part of the way of the Lord, wherein they were to be instructed, how to pray, that they may be enabled with grace, to do justice and judgment? And would he not in this go before them himself, and give them good example, and instruct them by his own practice. We read also of his building an altar, and calling upon the Name of the Lord, *Gen.* 12. 8. And that where he pitched his tent, or where his habitation or family was: So likewise when he removed from *Bethel* towards *Hebron*, and pitched his tent there, *Gen.* 13. 18. Thus also did *Isaac.* *Gen.* 26. 25. and *Jacob.* *Gen.* 33. 20. and 35. 1. And it is observable (which may fully clear the import of *Abraham's* and *Isaac's* building of altars) that when God said unto

Jacob,

Jacob, Gen. 35. 1. Arise go up to Bethel, and dwell there, & make there an altar unto God. Jacob immediately laboured to prepare his whole family for the worship of God, saying, Vers. 2. 3. To his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments, and let us arise and go up to Bethel, and I will make there an Altar unto God. Whence we see, That these altars which these patriarchs built, were not for themselves alone, but for them and their families; and therefore Jacob's family must be sanctified and prepared for the worship of God, by putting away the strange gods & changing of their garments.

11. So under the law, families were solemnly to worship God: their eating of the passover at the beginning, within their doors, was a solemn piece of worship: And when afterward they were to go up to *Jerusalem*, unto that feast; yet their families did eat it apart; And parents were enjoined to instruct their families, *Deut. 6. 7, 8. and 4, 10. and 11. 18 19. And to feast with their families before the Lord, in the place, which he was to choose for them, Deut. 12. 18. 19.* And moreover, the words of the fourth commandment are clear for families sanctifying of the sabbath, as families, within their ports: For all the members thereof are distinctly and particularly mentioned, and the very stranger, that sojourneth there for the time, is not omitted; and the charge is in a special manner laid upon the master of the family, in order to all the rest: So that all of them, as in the family, and as related to the father of the Family, either as their father, or master, &c. and he with them, are to sanctify that day, as a family: Otherwise if this had not been required, why should the master of the family have been spoken to, and that in reference to all the particular members of the family? If the Lord had only said, *Remember thou to sanctify the Sabbath day*, as in the other commands, this would have reached all persons, young and old,

superiour and inferiour, as we see other commands do; therefore when here, particular mention is made of all the members of a Family, something else must be imported, even the observation of this commandment by a family, as a family; that is, the sanctifying of the day of the Lord, by Family-worship, as well as by publick and solitary worship: And sure, something else is required, in this command, of a master of a family, in order to his family, and to the members thereof, than in order to the members of another family; And what can this be, but their conjunct worship of God, as such a family, in order to the sanctifying of that day?

12. All reasons requireth, That a manifest difference ought to be put betwixt the carriage of christian families, and the carriage of the familys of *Turks*, and *Pagans*; which commonly know nothing of this worship; as also betwixt the families of the godly, and the families of the prophane and wicked. Therefore all christian families, and particularly godly families should evidence their being devoted unto God, and taking pleasure in his worship, and delighting in drawing near to him, and in calling upon his Name.

13. It is observable, That the Apostle *Paul* writing to the *Colossians*, Chap. 3. and 4. after he had exhorted them, *To let the word of Christ dwell in them richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another, in Psalms and Hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in their hearts to the Lord*, Chap. 3. 16. Which most commodiously can be performed by families, as such: And after he had further exhorted them, *Verse, 17. That whatsoever they did in word or deed, to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.* Which all can be performed publickly by families together: He cometh in the following verses, and in the beginning of the next Chapter, to press upon them the mutual duties which all of them as members of a family, owe each to other: to teach

us, That in order of the right performance of the fore-mentioned christian duties, each in their familie relations, must mind the special duties, required of them, in reference to other; whereby also he signifieth, that the duties of mutual instruction of singing and of thanksgiving, were to be performed by them, particularly in Families. And moreover after mentioning of duties of all the family-relations, he closeth that purpose, *Chap. 4. 2, 3. Thus continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; with all, praying also for us.* Thereby clearly manifesting, That as he would have had the fore-mentioned duties, *Chap. 3. 16. 17.* performed by Families, as such, and not only by each particular person in their particular station; So in order to the right performance of all the mutual duties, in their Family-relations, he presseth them to Prayer, and to continuing and watching in the same: And this he presseth upon all the fore-mentioned Family-members, husband and wife, parents, and children, masters & servants; and thus manifestly presseth Prayer upon them, as a Family. So the same Apostle, writting to the *Ephesians*, after he had pressed upon them the duties required in their familie-relations, he in end, *Chap. 6. 18.* urgeth them to mind the duty of Prayer, saying, *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance.* Which must include Family-prayer, which is one way and manner of praying; and who must pray always, at all times and seasons, must not neglect Family-seasons and times, this being especially accomodated unto the performance of Family-duties; and a special mean and help thereunto; as also unto family wrestling against the wiles of the devil, who knoweth how to carry on his wicked designs, by Family-disorders, Family-scandal and the like.

14. So we find Family duties urged in order to the carrying on of Prayer, which must be Family-prayer.

Peter, 1 Epist. 3. 7. saith, Likewise ye husbands dwell with them, (i. e. with their wives) according to the knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered. The neglect of mutual duties betwixt man and wife hindreth their prayers, as man and wife; and this cannot be of their separate Prayers, or solitary prayers, only; but chiefly of their Family prayers. So *Paul, 1 Cor 7, 5. saith, Defraud not one the other, except with consent for a time, that you may give your selves to fasting and Prayer, and come together again, &c.* Hereby ordering their mutual duties, as man, and wife, in order to extraordinary duties of fasting and Prayer; which must be together, as man and wife, in their Family relation. And this would by parity hold good, in reference to ordinary Family Prayer.

15. It is recorded, That godly masters of Families have been careful of their Families, to keep them fixed unto God in worship. Of *Joshuah* it is said, *Josh. 24. 15. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.* He engageth not only for himself, but for his whole household also, in order to the publick serving of God, and that in opposition to those, who would serve other gods, which was also done, and might in time coming be done, by families as such, as well as by singular persons, or by more numerous and publick assemblies; as we see *Gideon's* father had an altar for *Baal*, *Judg. 6. 25.* And though the men of the city did also worship that idol, and were careful of keeping of it, *Vers. 28, 29, 30.* Yet it is particularly called the altar, which *Gideon's* father had; and when *Gideon* brake it down, it is said, *Vers. 27* He feared his father's household, as well as the men of the city: Whereby we see, That his father and his father's household were particularly engaged in this idolatrous worship, So we see what care *David* resolved to take, in ordering of his Family. *Psal. 101.* and *1 Sam. 6.* after he had blessed the whole congregation

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 gregation, *Vers.* 18. It is said of him, *Vers.* 20. That
he returned to bless his own house. So in the *New Test-*
ament, we read, *Acts.* 10. 2. of *Cornelius*, who
feared God with all his house, and Prayed alway: Which
 must include praying with his house. And it is like-
 ly that *Daniel* prayed with his Family. *Dan.* 6. 10.
 Both in regard, that that was more easie to be observed
 by his adversaries, than his closet-praying would have
 been; and in regard that hereby his testimony against
 that sinful decree, was the more publick, which zeal
 for God had now prompted him to. See *Job's* prac-
 tice, *Job.* 1. 5.

16. It is prophesied, and promised as a special blef-
 sing, in the day of the Lords returning unto his peo-
 ple the *Jews* with mercy and kindness, That a spirit
 of grace and supplication shall be poured forth upon
 Families, as such; so that each Familie or families
 (as it is in the original) should mourn apart, *Zech.*
 12. 10. 12. 13. This therefore must be a special
 duty.

17. So wrath is threatned against Families, that
 neglect this duty, *Jer.* 10. 25. *Psal.* 79. 6. *Pour*
out thy fury upon the heathen, that know thee not, and
upon the families, that call not upon thy Name. And
 though Families here may signifie tribes, or nations,
 made up of so many household and Families; yet the
 ground will be good by consequence; for if larger
 families should be thus punished, for neglect of this
 duty; why should lesler families think to escape,
 when guilty of the same crime? and how can this be
 charged on a nation, if the particular families be not
 to be charged therewith?

18. We find whole Families devoted solemnly
 unto Christ by baptism, *Acts.* 10, 48. and 11 14.
 and 16. 13. 31, 32, 33. and 18. 8. 1 *Cor.* 1. 16.
 And shall we suppose, That these served God no
 way thereafter, as families, & did not walk as families
 devoted unto the fear and service of God? We read
 also of churches in Families, *Gal.* 4. 15. *Rom.* 16.
 5. 2 *Col.* 16 19.

Philem V. 2. Yea, every christian Familie should be a christian little church, in order to the solemn worship of God.

19. Christian communion doth in a special manner call for this, at the hands of christians, living to commodiously together, and having so many advantages, occasions, helps and encouragements, to go about, and keep up this work; as such have, who are members of one family. If christians occasionally meeting together, should be ready to worship the Lord, according to the present exigent, whether by Prayer or praises; much more should families, or such who are statedly and fixedly constituent members of one oeconomical body, be ready and willing in a more stated & fixed manner, to celebrate the praises of God especially seeing they may more readily partake of the plagues, which others of the company procure by their sins, as we see, *Gen. 20, 7. 17. 18,* and *12. 17. Josh. 7. 24. 25. 1 Kings. 13. 10. 11. 2 Chron 21, 14. 1 Sam. 21, 22, 23.*

20. It cannot be denied, but families, as such, are capable of mercies and favours at the hand of God: as also of judgments and plagues because of sin. Wherefore it is most certain, that as favours bestowed upon private persons, call for a suitable acknowledgement thereof at their Hands, *1 Thes. 5. 17. 13.. Col. 4. 2.* and *3. 16.* And as the like Favours bestowed on Nations, or Country sides, or on cities and churches, call for thanksgiving at their hands, in the same capacities, wherein they receive these good things: so the like, bestowed on Families, call for a suitable acknowledgement in their capacities, and a return of thanks at their hands, as families: and upon the other hand as judgments threatned, imminent, or impendent, or executed upon kingdoms, or churches, or cities, yea, or upon single persons, call for mourning and humiliations at their hands, in these respective capacities; so when families are tryed with the like dispensations, they, in that capacity, are called to a suitable deportment,

portment, as nature and religion will teach. So also because they have need of many favours and blessings out of the hands of God, both temporal and spiritual : Nature and religion will say, that they, as families, should ask these of God, through Jesus Christ : For all things are sanctified by Prayer, *1 Tim.* 4. 5.

21. The general commands of praying everywhere, *1 Tim.* 2. 3. and without ceasing, *1 Thes.* 5. 15. 17. 18. and the like, *Col.* 4. 2. and 3. 16. 17. *Eph.* 6. 18. do manifestly enforce this ; for here are singular advantages occasions and opportunities.

22. The neglect of this is a rejecting of the mercy love and kindness of God, offered them in their access to God, as a family.

23. Families must seek Gods blessing to, and give thanks for their meat, *1 Tim.* 4. 3. 4. 5. *Ergo*, For thanks for their meat, *1 Tim.* 4. 3, 4. 5. *Ergo* For other favours also.

24. Masters of families must teach their families : *Ergo* they must pray with them.

These reasons may suffice to prove, that Family-prayer, is a duty : and as to the advantage thereof, we shall content our selves with naming a few, by which also we may understand the hurt, and disadvantages, that families lie open unto, which neglect this duty : All which will also enforce the duty.

1. What an honourable and advantageous thing is it, to have God shining in love on a family, and dwelling in it, as his temple and habitation : And when families are as churches and sanctuaries unto the Lord, by offering up unto him daily the sacrifices of praise, and the calves of the lip. When the Apostle, *2 Cor.* 6. 14. is pressing the *Corinthians*, not to be unequally yoked ; that is, That christians should not marry with infidels ; he useth these arguments in the following Verses, 15, 16, 17, 18. *For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness ? And what communion hath light with darkness ? And what*

Concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. &c. Whereby we see, That when families are consisting of christians, and they demeaning themselves, as becometh christians, they are the temple of God, wherein dwelleth righteousness, and light, and Christ; God dwelleth in them, and walketh in them, and becometh their God, when they carry as his people: And when they touch no unclean thing, he becometh a father unto them, and they his sons and daughters.

2. When families are thus carrying as christian families, devoting themselves unto God, and worshipping him, they are fair to receive rich blessings from God, and ly open to his influences of love and mercy: When Jacob purged his family, and erected an altar unto the Lord, at *Luz*, or *Bethel*, *Gen. 35*. God appeared unto him, and blessed him, and gave him the name *Israel*, and renewed the promises made to *Abraham* and to *Isaac*, Verse. 10. 11. 12.

3. God who heareth prayers, will hear Family-prayers, & give a return in mercy; when he is sought unto, and served in the due manner: He is called the hearer of Prayers indefinitely, without restriction to individual persons, or to churches. *The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears open unto their cry*, *Psal. 34. 15*. So his eyes are upon righteous families, and his ears open to their cry; as the opposition in the next Verse will clear; for there he saith, *The face of the Lord, is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth*: Now this cutting off their remembrance is a stroke against their families and posterity; when families are wicked, God's face is against them to destroy them; but when families are righteous, the Lord's eyes are upon them, to bless them, to preserve their memo-

rial and remembrance, and to multiply them. Beside, that righteous families, may meet with trouble: And so when they cry, *the Lord heareth and delivereth them out of all their troubles, Verse. 17, 19.* O! what a rich & noble advantage is this, that they have God's ear? We see what a rich blessing came on *Cornelius's* family, which was a family of prayer, their prayer was heard, and fully answered, *Acts. 10. 4. 5. &c.* How blessed must that family be, that hath God so near to them, in all that they need, dwelling in the midst of them, hearkening to their supplications, taking all their petition out of their hand. When a family becometh *the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their off spring with them*; as it is *Isa. 65. 23.* then it cometh to pass, as it is in the following Verse, *That before they call, I will answer, & whilst they are yet speaking, I will hear saith the Lord*: And who can imagine what the worth of this advantage is?

4. As families receive outward favours from the hand of God, as well as particular persons; so when these come unto them by the means of Prayer, how sweet and singular do these favours become? How do they smell of heaven, & of love of free grace? when families are fearing the Lord, and hoping in his mercy, and evidencing the same in their instant Prayer unto him, than his keeping them alive in famine, & becoming their help and their shield, as it is, *Psal. 33. 18. 19.* hath a peculiar sweetness and relish of fatherly care and protection. It is said, *Psal. 34. 7. 8. 9. 10.* *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste & see; that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord ye his saints, for there is no want to them, that fear him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord, shall not want any good thing.* And as this holdeth good of particular saints; so also of families; for the angel of the Lord encampeth about families that fear him; as

we see he did encamp about *Jacob's* family, that their neighbours did not pursue after them; when *Simeon* and *Levi*, had committed that bloody fact upon the *Shechemites*. See *Gen.* 35, 5. When families fear the Lord, and draw nigh him in fear, they need not fear want; for they that seek the Lord, be they nations, cities, churches, families, or persons, shall not want any good thing. And when praying families receive all their good thus, what a peculiar heavenly smell must they have; when they flow from free grace, through a promise, after prayer, and dependence upon him by Prayer; they cannot be common favours, but special tokens of love, care, kindness & faithfulness.

5. Prayer is the mean to obtain the sanctified blessing unto family-mercies; The family must have food and raiment, and other things of that nature necessary for its sustentation and preservation: Now all these things are sanctified by Prayer, *1 Timothy.* 4. 4, 5. *For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God, and Prayer.*

6. There may be in the family some young or old, one or other, or more, who have need of the pourings out of the spirit, for their conviction and conversion; who stand in need of clean water to be poured upon them, and of the spirit to sanctify and purge them: There may be one or other carried away with corruption, and under the power thereof, under the power of some lust: And much sin may be lying upon the family; Now, in order to the obtaining of the spirit of God, in order to, the delivery from these evils, Prayer is requisite, for as to all these things, promised in the new covenant, the Lord will be enquired of by the house of *Israel.* *Ezek.* 36 & 47. and consequently by every family & the house of *Israel*, *Job* was careful to sanctify his family, & to offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all; For he said, *It may be that they have sinned, and*
angered God in

their hearts. And this was *Job's* daily work. *Job.* 1. 5.

7 It is pleasant and comely, to see families walking in the fear of God, each minding their duty to other, in a christian manner, and all walking in their places, and stations, in an edifying and holy way. Hu bands and wives carrying to other as becometh; Masters and servants minding their mutual duties to one another; and parents and children walking each in their station, in the fear of God; whileas, when all things are out of course, mutual duties laid aside, the fear of God cast off, and all things turned upside down; yea, or when any one person in the family is out of order, what a discord is caused, where a sweet harmony ought to be? and how do the family become worse, than a prison? Now, by continuing in Prayer, is this great good had; for it is a mean to keep all the respective members of the family, in their due places, and to keep them at their several respective duties, as we cleared above, from *Coloss.* 3. & 4.

8. What a comely, pleasant, and desireable sight is it to a spiritual soul, to see a family assembling together, and daily devoting themselves unto God, to be for him, all the day; to be led by his counsel, to be guided by his spirit, in all christian obedience, to be devoted to his fear, and service, as wholly for him and his glory in the world; and subordinating all things, that concern them, unto him, and his interest. And again returning at evening, giving due thanks unto the Lord for favours received, and consecrating the gain of all unto him? Now all this is down by Prayer, rightly gone about, in the family; There, all with one voice offer up themselves, and present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, even their reasonable service, *Rom.* 12. 10. and all again with one voice, offer him the calves of their lips, and return him thanks for his goodness and mercy: How desireable a thing is this to see families like temples, wherein was daily the morning and evening sacrifice offered up upon the Altar.

9. When any visitation, ordinary or extraordinary, is on the family, any rod upon any member thereof, any cross, or sad dispensation upon the whole, or upon any part, young or old, what a great advantage have such families, as have been, and are making conscience of this duty? For they have no ground to look upon that plague, as a fruit of that wrath, which God poureth forth on the families, that call not on his name; in regard that they have been in some measure, aiming and minting at the duty: They have access to God through Jesus Christ, for seeking of his blessing unto that dispensation, and the sanctified improvement thereof: every creature of God (and crosses may be reckoned among his creatures) is sanctified by Prayer.

10. This moreover is a great advantage, that they are not in such hazard (ordinarily) of satan's wiles, who daily watcheth opportunity to ensnare; and hath his baits and temptations shaped for families, as well as for private persons; and families must wrestle against these principalities, against the powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against wicked spirits, as well as others; and therefore they must be armed, with the whole armour of God; and must pray always with all prayer and supplication, *Ephes. 6, 11, 12, 18*. Now such families, as are thus praying always with all Prayer and supplication, and are delivering themselves over unto the protection of God, that they may be kept from the snares of that fowler, have a great advantage of others, who laying aside this duty, ly open unto the arrows of that wicked one; how soon can satan sow discord in a family, whether betwixt man and wife, or betwixt master and servant, or betwixt parents and children, to the disturbance of the whole? And what peace can such families have, when it is so with them, & that as the fruit of their neglect of this duty? or what ground of hope can any family have, of being protected here from, which neglecteth this mean of safety?

11. Where families are making conscience of this duty, they are all in a better case to serve God acceptably in the more publick assemblies of his People, than otherwise. When churches are made up of churches, and every family is a small church; and when God is worshipped in those smaller churches carefully and religiously; the publick worship, in the assemblies of the saints, must be carried on with greater beauty, unanimity, cheerfulneſs and heavenly concord: but on the the contrary, where this is neglected, and families assemble together without this previous preparation, how little spiritſful harmony can there be expected? When hearts are out of tune, the ſound muſt be jarring.

12. Families have hereby their communion kept with God, & thus are kept in the ſuburbs of heaven; hereby they tell him all their wants, and make known to him all their deſires, caſt all their care and burthens on him, conſult him in all difficult caſes, & get their reſolutions from: Thus they get help, relie, ſtrength, ſupport, light, and what their caſe calleth for. O! what a ſatistyng, pleaſant, and delectable life muſt this be?

By theſe things we may ſee what an advantageous duty this is, and how much good it is to be expected thereby, and how hurtful the neglect of it muſt needs be, whereby all ſuch as are concerned ſhould conſider the encouragements they have hereby unto this duty, which ſhould be as ſo many arguments.

But it will be enquired, who in the family ſhould go before, in this duty of family-prayer? *Answer* Doubtleſs, the duty lyeth upon the maſter of the family; for he is the head of the wife, and an head to his children and ſervants, and ſo is head to the whole Family: The charge of the whole Family lyeth mainly upon him: And in the *fourth command*, he is ſpoken to, as having charge of, and authority over the whole family.

But what, in caſe the head of the family hath not

the gift of Prayer; and so is not in case to carry on the work, with any tolerable *decorum*, as a part of the worship of God? *Answer*, Yet the duty lying chiefly upon him, [he is to pray, and all the rest also in private for him, that the Lord may be pleased to pour on him his spirit, enabling him for the duty, in some measure: And if there were a willing mind and due means used with dependence in singleness upon God, there is ground of hope, that in due time, his gift may grow, and he be made more able to carry on the work handsomely: Yet if the wife be more fit for the work, she may help forward the work; Nay, before the work be neglected, it were better that a servant, being therunto fitted of the Lord, should discharge the work; yet so, as the head of the family should not judge himself exoner'd, and to lay aside all endeavours after abilities to discharge his duty: Yea, a stranger may at some occasions do it.

When is the fittest season for this? *Answer*, Nature seemeth to have determin'd morning and evening, at least, for this work the morning before the family be engaged in their daily work, that thanking the Lord for the mercies of that morning, they may seek his favour and blessing for the whole day: And the evening that having returned thanks for the mercies of the day; they may roll themselves over unto God's protection for the night: But as to the particular time, or season in the morning, or evening, or at mid-day; each family can best judge of their own circumstances, and so determine of the season, wherein they will best be in case to discharge the duty, and have fewest distractions or difficulties to meet with; or when the family can be best assembled, and attend the work without distraction. There being here no positive determination, made by the Lord, christian prudence is to direct, so as the duty may be best performed, and thereby God most glorified, and all concerned most edified.

But some will say, their necessary and sore work will

will not allow them to much time, as is requisite to spend in family duty. *Answer*, if the work be necessary and sore, they have the more need of God's help and blessing, knowing that, *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it; Except the Lord keep the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain. And that it is in vain for them to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so he giveth his beloved sleep.* Psal. 127. 1, 2. God's blessing can reach far, and make little do much. And when a family is careful to give God his due honour and homage, and to leave all their concerns upon him; he will think himself concerned to care for them, according as he seeth fit. I grant withal that when something occurreth in providence, that could not be foreseen, or prevented, which will make that time, which usually was spent in that work, less commodious for the same; The Lord alloweth us not to be superstitiously bound unto any set hours, but to use our christian liberty; so as his work be not wholly deferred, nor his service postponed to our private concerns.

What if there be some members of the family dissolute and disorderly, that will but mock, instead of concurring cheerfully in the duty? *Answer*, If that disorderly person be under authority, as a servant or son, they should be kept by authority in order. And a servant that will mock, should not dwell in the family; The master of the family should use his authority to keep his house undefiled, after David's example, Psal. 101. and a son should be rebuked; and if he continue rebellious, and cannot be restrained from his wickedness by all that the parents can do, he should be delivered into the magistrates hand according to the law, Deut. 21. 18. 19. 20. 21. The duty should not, because of this, be neglected, it being a mean to rectifie these evils, and to bring the blessing of God, even in spiritual things, upon the family: if either the husband or the wife be the guilty

guilty person here, I grant the difficulty is the greater; but yet there are means appointed of the Lord to rectifie this, if after all private means essayed in vain, church discipline be dully execute upon the guilty person, much evil might be remedied in disorderly Families.

But is it not enough, that every member of the family seek God in secret? *Ans.* No, For, as we have cleared above, this is a duty required of families as such, every family apart, as well as every person apart, should call upon the Lord, and mourn before him. And as this secret prayer ought not to prejudice the publick worship of God, in churches; so neither ought it, to shut out this family worship. Nay, where prayer in private is made conscience of by every member of the family; as they are in greater fitness for the performance of this family duty; - so there will be a greater real readinets to go about it, as the wise man saith, *Prov. 28. 9. He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination:* That is, He, who neglecteth the publick worship, shall find his private less acceptable: So he who neglecteth this more publick worship of God in the family, shall find less acceptance in his more Private and solitary devotions, his secret prayers shall be an abomination unto the Lord, if he despise family worship, and think it needless, or withdraw his presence therefrom under pretext of serving God in private.

But (it will be said) how can so much time be had from our ordinary and necessary imployments, in our calling, as is requisite both for our private prayers, & for this family duty? *Answer.* Where there is an unwilling heart unto, or an heart wearying of the service of God, every thing will prove a lion in the way and a strong impediment and objection: But a willing and ready mind will easily find out a satisfying answer to all: The soul being more precious than the body, and our care of God's honour, being preferable

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 terable to our care of our own and our family's outward welfare: Whatever be neglected, God and our own souls should not be forgotten: But the Lord desireth not, that we should wholly neglect families, having said, 1: Tim, 5. 8. *But if any provide not for his own and especially for those of his own house (or kindred) he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.* Only he willeth us to do all with a due subordination; and willeth us to use spiritual wisdom, in order to the redeeming of the time, and to ordering of all our affairs so, as there be no interfering of the one duty with the other, but both may be duly and rightly performed, to the glory of God, and to our own spiritual advantage. The righteous man will *guide his affairs with discretion* Plal. 112. 5. As others know, how to manage their time, in a market day, to the best advantage; so should the godly man know how to manage his time and opportunity best, in this spiritual trade, to most spiritual advantage, Eph, 5, 15, 16. Col. 4. 5.

C H A P. IX.

Whence cometh so much Averseness unto Prayer.

HAVING thus spoken something of the duty of Prayer, it will not be amiss, that the practice of this duty be a little pressed, which bringeth us to the *Third* thing considerable in the first part of the Text, *to wit*, That howbeit Prayer be an unquestionable duty; yet people are averse therefrom: and therefore need so many motives, increments and encouragements to set them on unto the duty Whence we have ground.

First, to enquire after the causes of this unwillingness to, and averiation of heart from, the performance of this duty.

Secondly, To mention some of these motives, that may serve to animate, encourage, and set us on the cheerful and ready going about the same.

As to the *First*, in reference to such, as are strangers to God, we need not much enquire after the causes of their unwillingness to this work, seeing the proper, kindly and natural language of their heart is, that which *Job* mentioned, *Chap. 21. 14. 15. They say, unto God, depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what profit should we have if we pray unto him?* They hate God and all his ways, and therefore they have no love to communion with him; no delight to be speaking to him, nor desire to be keeping up correspondence with him. They have no knowledge of God, nor of themselves; want of understanding, and not seeking after God go together. *Rom. 3, 11.* They are set upon wicked courses against God and his people. *They eat up God's people, as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord, Pjal. 14. 4.* They are like *Laodicea*, ignorant of their own blindness, nakedness and poverty; and therefore they seek not after Eye-salve, clothing, or tried gold. Or if at any time they go about the duty, fear, or a natural conscience, may set them on, and not love to God; or self love and vanity, that they may have a name among professors; as we see in *the Pharisees*, who not only prayed, but made long prayers; and yet all was but to be seen of men. So that it is little wonder to find such averse from Prayer.

But it may seem more strange, that God's own children should at any time, need spurs unto this duty, seeing not only they are made partakers of the divine nature; but have also received the spirit of Christ, whereby they cry; *Abba Father.* A spirit of prayer is poured out upon them, and the new nature which they had gotten, enclineth them Godward, and causeth them delight in converse with God

Whence

Whence then cometh it, that sometimes they need incitements and motives unto this duty? I *Answer* We may as to this dismal effect, take notice of three general causes bringing it about.

First. There is the supreme over-ruling hand of God, considerable in this matter, which is always holy, pure and just. For he, for holy and wise ends, whether for instruction, or correction; may and doth withdraw, or withhold his spirit, which he is pleased to bestow freely; and therefore is called a *free Spirit* *Psal.* 51. 12. And when the influences of heaven are withheld, and the springs and fountains of the depths are closed-up or stopped, the earth must be dry and barren; so when the Lord withholdeth or withdraweth the influence of his grace, whereby life, spirit and activity is conveyed into the spiritually principled soul, the principle of life decayeth; the soul's strength and activity weareth away, and the christian life becometh sick, and weak, and the man is like one fainting and swooning, unable to speak, or do any thing. And thus the Lord may, in his holy providence, order matters. either as provoked thereunto, by their sinful miscarriages; as we see in *David*. when he committed that hainous transgression; or by their not improving diligently and carefully the sweet seasons of grace, but turning negligent, in not trading with the talent, God, out of his free grace, hath bestowed; or as minding to manifest his sovereignty, and the freedom of his grace; to the End, they may be instructed to know, that all is of free grace, and undeserved; and therefore they are called to be humble, and to carry as tenants at will, & to walk dependently, submissively, thankfully and circumspectly, with a care to improve all the advantages and opportunities of grace, and all the warm and quickning breathings of the spirit.

Secondly, The hand of satan is herein to be observed also: For he is a restless, malicious enemy, and goeth about daily, as a roaring lion, seeking to de-

your and swallow up the children of God; and when he cannot get that done, using all diligence to raise all the forces of opposition against them he can, that at least he may retard their progress, or make them march slowly and heartlessly: He raiseth clouds and darkness in their minds; and so jumbleth and perplexeth them, that they know not what to do: He maketh their chariots move slowly, and thereby discourageth them, and causeth them to faint in the way; and thus piece and piece increaseth their prejudice at the duty; and at length prevaileth, through the holy and righteous permission of God, by his entanglements, surmises, temptations and difficulties cast into the way, to cause them either neglect the duty altogether, or to set about it heartlessly, and faintly; so that they soon weary, and at length are easily brought to lay it aside, as an uneasie burden under which they cannot longer stand.* He can raise prejudices in their minds against the duty upon many accounts, and take occasions from every occurrence, to fortifie and confirm them in these prejudices and thereby alienate their hearts more and more, from the careful and conscionable discharge of the duty. He can blow at the coal of their corruptions, and make that kindle into a flame, whereby they shall be hurried into many distempers, and utterly unhinged and indisposed for the work, and at length made unwilling to go about it.

Thirdly, The remnant of corruption, that is yet in the best, as tinder, wherein satan can cast sparks of fire, to kindle a new flame, is considerable here, as a cause hereof; & this being a culpable cause in us, both provoking the Lord to withdraw his influences, and to give up to this evil, in his righteous judgment; and opening the door of advantage to satan, or proving fit matter for him to work upon, or play his wicked game by, is therefore most particularly to be taken notice of by us: I shall therefore name some

few of these evils, which do sinfully occasion and bring on this aversness to the duty of Prayer.

1. When some lust or other hath got advantage, & hath not been carefully withstood and resisted; but too much countenanced and yeelded unto; then, as the heart is thereby deteriorated, and made more unfit for any christian work; so in particular, the man is out of all frame for an holy and humble approaching unto God; who is an holy God, and will be sanctified of all them that draw near him. When the heart is under the power of any lust, and is carried away therewith, the man is a captive, held in fetters, and cannot go with freedom and liberty unto God, as he was wont to do; and if he keep up the form of the duty; yet it is but superficially performed, without that delectation and complacency of soul, that formerly he had; and thus the duty becometh at length a cumbersome burden, which on every occasion is readily laid aside: When *David* was under the power of that corruption, and carried headlong with the swing thereof; he was not his own man; nor can it be thought, That the duty of Prayer was either so conscionably performed as formerly, or with such pleasure and delight.

2. When after the committing of some sin, or giving way to some corruption, the conscience is awakened, and sin in its dreadful guilt is presented, and held before the man's eyes; then he is afraid to draw near to God, guilt stareth him in the face, and he is thereby driven back, and dare not approach unto the holy and righteous God. Satan can in that case prompt conscience to say, it is in vain to seek the Lord; for he hath no respect for the sacrifice of fools, he will not hear sinners: & thus there can be no hearty & cheerful drawing near unto God, so long as guilt is thus charged home, and the blood of Christ not applied by faith, to wash away that iniquity, this duty by faith, to wash away that iniquity, this duty becometh terrible, and the man trembleth to think of approaching unto God lest he be consum-

ed: Thus the poor man is lettered and bound hand and foot, with the cords of his own sin; and held off, that he neither can, nor dare draw nigh; until the Lord be pleased to open the door of grace, and show the freedom of the covenant, and lead the soul unto the fountain opened to the house of *David*, and to the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, for sin and for uncleanness.

3. Deep apprehension of their own unworthiness, vileness and inward abominableness of heart by nature, may cause some, when forgetful of, or not minding the rich condescensions of free grace in the new covenant, through Jesus Christ, scar at this duty, and think with themselves, Shall or dare such a vile wretch, as I am, presume to open my mouth unto God? Dare such an one who seeth so much of the villany and wickedness of his own heart, so much atheism and rebellion against Him, draw nigh unto him, who is of purer eyes than that he can behold evil. *Hab.* 1, 13. Dare such, as are conscious to themselves of so much hellish perverseness, as they are, think of praying unto God, who is a consuming fire, and hateth all the workers of iniquity? *Heb* 12, 29. *Psal.* 5. 5. Thus, as *Peter* in the like case said, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man O Lord.* *Luke* 5. 8. So they say, we must not draw nigh to God, for we are sinful men: Though the reason be bad, yet it may too much prevail with weak souls, to keep them from this duty.

4. So may deep apprehensions of the greatness, holiness, purity, justice and glory of God, have the same effect, especially when accompanied with the fore-mentioned apprehensions of themselves, and when improved by satan, preying upon a melancholy humour.

5. When they upon one occasion or other, give way unto the neglect of this duty, their praying frame weareth off; the Lord is provoked to withdraw his influences, and satan layeth hold on the opportunity,

to keep them a going, or running downward and thus their neglect continueth, more difficulties stand up in the way ; and thus at length, their neglect turneth to a listlessness and want of pleasure, or delight in the duty : And from this they come to an aversion and unwillingness to set about it, until the Lord send some alarm to awaken them. When Peter and the other disciples, that were with Christ, in the garden, neglected the duty at the first call of Christ, when he bad them watch and pray, they became the longer the more unfit afterward ; so that reiterated insinuations had no force.

6. When persons take not care to watch over their heart in prayer, and to guard against carnality and formality, in performing of it, all edge and seriousness weareth away, and the duty being but superficially, and for a fashion only performed, it soon becometh an unnecessary task : And Satan, improving the opportunity, through the holy permission of God, can quickly make that, become an heavy burthen, which is already become an unnecessary task ; and when the soul is carried this length, to judge the duty of Prayer a burden, it can very easily be induced to neglect it, or lay it aside, for some time, if conscience (which the Lord in his justice and wisdom, may cause to be silent) do not in the meantime challenge ; and from this the man may very readily be brought to a longer neglect, and to an unwillingness to set about it : And the longer the duty is neglected, the heart is still more and more unfit for it, and unwilling to go about it.

7. Carnality and worldly-mindedness, as it is a great enemy unto all religious duties ; so in particular, it is a great enemy unto prayer, and a praying frame : As the cares of the world choak the word, that it cannot grow up in the soul, *Matth.* 13. So it utterly indisposeth unto watchfulness ; and a praying frame & a watching frame go together, *Luke*, 11, 36. And when the heart is overcharged with

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turfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, *ver*
34. The soul cannot watch and pray. Hence we
find the apostle, *Phil*, 4, 6. *Joining these together*
Be careful for nothing; but in every thing, by prayer
and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests
be made known unto God.

8. Excessive grief and sorrow upon any outward
account, may so unhinge, discompose and disframe
the soul, that the man cannot mind the duty of pray-
er, or set about it with heartiness and cheerfulness,
as he was wont to do; This is given as one reason,
why the disciples could not pray, in the garden, not-
withstanding of the great urgency of that extraordi-
nary exigent, *Luke*, 22. 45. *Matth.* 26, 43. *Their*
eyes were heavy, and they were sleeping for sorrow.

9. When there is not a watching unto prayer, by
taking hold of all opportunities thereunto, and of all
the free and gracious motions of the spirit is provok-
ed to withdraw; and when he withdraweth, dead-
ness followeth, and the soul's activity for the duty is
gone; so that either the duty is laid aside, or the
man goeth heavily under it, as under an insupport-
able load: Hence we find the apostle joining these
two together, *1 Thess.* 5. 17, 18, 19. *Pray without*
ceasing: In every thing give thanks. --- Quench not the
spirit, --- Showing us, That if we would be kept
in a praying frame, or in a case to pray always, we
must be careful, not to quench the spirit.

10. This evil may also flow from pride and petted-
ness; when the person hath been praying some con-
siderable time, for some special mercy, or other, and
findeth no return, or no return unto satisfaction,
corruption may boil up in the heart, and satan may
suggest, That it is a vain exercise, thus to be praying;
there is no profit to be had, by calling unto the al-
mighty; and the soul may listen hereunto, and, out
of a male-contented, displeased humour, resolve to
trouble it self no more with prayer, but lay it aside
altogether, as being weary of the Lord; as it is, *Isa.*
43. 12.

11. When

11. When there is an erroneous opinion drunk in concerning Prayer; as that we are not obliged to pray, but when we are sensible of the spirit's moving us thereunto, and setting us agoing; and till this come, we think, we are exoner'd from the duty: In this case, the Lord may be provoked to let them live many months, if not years, without such free gales, as they would have, in order to their setting about the duty: And hence may come a long neglect of this duty: and this may be followed with an inward aversion of heart from it: or if at any time they be moved to the duty, he may suffer their own spirit instead of his, to set them on; and this will never beget a spiritual deilght in the duty; and the present tickling satisfaction, that they may have therein, will not be permanent, nor oyl the wheels of the soul to go on equably, at a constant christian pace.

12. When a spirit of laziness seizeth a person, & he giveth way thereunto, folding his hands willingly with the sluggard, and giving himself over to rest; and doth not rouze and stir up himself, to call upon the Lord, and to take hold of him, as it is, *I/ai.* 64. 7. Then this distemper groweth; and as he becometh daily more and more unfit for the duty; so he becometh more unwilling to set about it: for as it is said of the slothful man, *Prov.* 26. 15. *That he hideth his hand in his bosom, and it grieveth him* (or he is weary) *to bring it again to his mouth.* It is a very burden to him, to bring his hand out of his bosom to his mouth: So here the man, on whom this spiritual sloth seizeth, findeth it a grief, and a weariness to do that which otherwise was a most easie thing.

13. When persons leaning more unto a gift of prayer than unto Jesus for present influences, and supplies set about the duty; The Lord in his righteousness may withdraw the ordinary influences of his spirit, & leave them to wrestle with the duty their alone: and they hereby, not finding the throw-bearing they have some time experienced, may come to Perceive that

the duty will not go with them, as formerly ; and this may cause inward grief, though not upon the account of the provocations, that did procure it, and creat a prejudice at the duty : And hence corruption, working in the soul, and satan improving the occasion, the duty may piece and piece be laid a side, and at length the person may become averſe from ſetting about it what through inward diſcontentment, what through pride, becauſe they ſee, the duty will not now go with them, as ſome time it did : and they are now aſhamed, eſpecially as to prayer before others.

C H A P. X.

Some Encouragements to Prayer mentioned

Seing by what is ſaid, it is manifeſt, that even in God's own children, there is ſometimes an unwillingneſs to go about this duty of prayer, to be remarked ; and it is alſo undeniable. that the wicked have no pleaſure or delight in it, except upon corrupt principles, and for corrupt ends, as we read of the *Phariſees*, in the goſpel, and of theſe mentioned, *I. ſui.* 58. 2. And ſeeing our Lord is encouraging his diſciples here, to mind the duty of prayer, we may ſpeak a little unto the many encouragements the Lord hath given in his word, unto the conſcientious and diligent diſcharge of this neceſſary duty, and mention a few.

1. It ſhould be no ſmall encouragement unto this duty, That the Lord would allow us to call upon his Name ; that he ſuffereth the door of his grace to ſtand open to ſinners, conſidering what we have been and done, and what we yet are : ' We have rebelled againſt him, and are by nature out-laws, and remain

rebellious in our hearts : We are heirs of his wrath and curse ; and are under the sentence of condemnation, by nature : And O ! what grace and favour is it, that he hath not passed an irremediable sentence and that the sentence is not already executed ! What more encouragement would a condemned malefactor require, to cry for pardon, than to hear it said ; That so long, as the sentence is not execute, the door of the king's mercy standeth open, and he will not be offended, that condemned malefactors cry to him for pardon and mercy ? Should it not then be encouragement enough to all to cry, who know what a miserable condition they are in, how they ly under the sentence of the law & how there is no remedy, relief or outgate, but by the free grace and mercy of that offended God ? The fallen angels, nor the souls now in prison, have not this encouragement ; the door is for ever and ever closed upon them ; there is no hope at all for them ; they are irrecoverably gone ; so that though they should cry, it would not avail them : But with us, so long as we are living, it is not so desperate ; There is hope for a living man : And therefore there is encouragement enough to mind this duty.

2. Not only doth the door of Gods mercy and free grace stand open ; but the Lord calleth unto this duty, and commandeth us to go about it, under the pain of his displeasure. He hath written the duty on the heart of man, that none who hath any apprehension of a God, can deny this obligation to call unto him : Though the corruption of nature be great ; yet it cannot delete the sense of this duty : For heathens, who are strangers to the true and living God, will call upon their stocks, and idols, in their straits : And beside, there are frequent commands hereunto in the word, as might be at large rehearsed, if it were not unquestionable. And this cannot but be a large encouragement, and powerful. A condemned malefactor, hearing that the king had sent him word, and

told him, that he should cry for mercy, would conceive hope, and look upon it, as a mighty encouragement unto supplicating of his prince for pardon ; How much more, if he knew, that his not supplicating would provoke the king to more anger against him, and be cause enough to procure a new sentence of death. What an encouragement was it to blind *Bartimeus*, to come to Jesus, to seek his sight, when it was said unto him, *Be of good comfort, rise he calleth thee*, Mark, 10. 49. How quickly did he then cast away his garment, rise, and come away to Jesus ? *Verse. 50.*

3. Yea. The Lord challengeth people for the neglect of this duty, and chargeth it home upon them, as their sin ; so displeased is he with such as lay it aside : See *Isai.* 43, 22. *Hosea*, 7, 7. 14. And what would we seek more for an encouragement unto this duty, than to have it told us that the neglect of it will be charged upon us, as our sin ? Will not such think this motive strong enough, who are already sensible of their provocations, and afraid of the anger of God, because of them ? Will not such, as are already groaning under a burden of sin and guilt, be encouraged to cry, when they hear, that their not-crying unto the Lord will make their burden of guilt so much the heavier. Sure, such will have reason to say, my guilt is great enough already, why should I make it greater by neglecting this duty !

4. Yea, the Lord taketh special pleasure, & delight, in the prayers of his people ; Hence we read in the *Proverbs of Solomon*, Chap. 15. 8. *That the Prayer of the upright is his delight.* So in the *Canticles* Chap. 2. 14. Christ speaks to his bride, and saith, *O my dove, that are in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs ; let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice ; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.* And Chap, 4. 11. *Thy lips, O my spouse drop as the honeycomb ; honey and milk are under thy tongue.* Meaning hereby her speaking to him by

by Prayer. The Lord careth not for all the sacrifices of his people, where this is away, *Psal. 50. I will not reprove thee.* (saith he, *Verse. 8. 9. 13.*) for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, &c. What then would the Lord have? *V. 14. 15. Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high. And call upon me, in the day of trouble, &c. So Isai. 66. 3. He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man, &c.* What then hath the Lord respect unto? See *Verse. 2. To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my Word:* And such are praying persons.

5. There is now a fair and wide door opened, for their access unto God through Jesus Christ; and this is a great encouragement; for when they think with themselves, how dare we approach unto the holy Lord, who cannot behold evil, when we are such vile and abominable sinners? How can we think of standing before such an one, as hateth all the workers of iniquity, this may comfort them, and encourage them: That Christ is now become master-usher to all his poor followers; He hath opened the door of mercy, and holdeth it open; for he is the way to the father, *John. 14. 6. In Christ Jesus we are made nigh by the blood of Christ, Ephes. 2. 13. And through him we have access, Verse, 18. and in him, we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Ephes. 3. 12.* What can now hinder, or scar a poor sinner from coming unto God by prayer, when he hath Christ to take him by the hand, and to bring him in to the Father. Seeing then that we have such a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, *Jesus, the Son of God, we ought to come boldly unto the throne of Grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace for help in time of need. Heb, 4. 14. 16.* Wherefore no sight or apprehension of our own vileness, & unworthiness, can justly prove a dissuasive unto our approaching, or stand as an impediment in our way, seeing this high priest liveth for ever, and hath made

way, for us & hath consecrated unto us a new & living way through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; Nay, we have hereby boldness and liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of J-hus, *Heb. 10. 19. 20.*

6. Not only hath Christ thus made the door open unto us, and giving ground of great boldness, in access to God; but as high priest he presenteth the Prayers and desires of his people, in his censer, and offereth them up unto God, as an acceptable sacrifice *Rev. 8. 3. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense that he should add it to the prayers of all saints, and offer it upon the golden altar, which was before the throne.* As we are made accepted in the beloved, *Ephes. 1. 6.* so this duty of prayer is a part of that living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service, *Rom. 12. 1.* Hence supplications, Prayers, and intercessions, for all men are good and acceptable in the sight of God our saviour, *1 Tim. 2. 3.* This is part of our spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, *1 Pet. 5.* How may this consideration hearten a poor sinner to call upon God, how fecklets soever and sinful he apprehend his prayers to be; seeing they come not in before God alone, or upon the account of their own intrinsick worth; but as perfumed with Christ's incense, and as offered up by him, in his censer; and they are accepted in him. And beside, this being Christ's work, as high priest, to offer up the reasonable service and prayers of his people, that they might be accepted in him, how delightful and pleasant should it be to us, to be giving Christ much employment in his priestly office? and how should we be encouraged to pray much upon this account, that thereby Christ getteth work?

7. The Lord's taking upon him, the relation of a Father, in a special manner, and not in a general and common notion only, as being our creator and preservator, in which respect, he is a father to all his creatures; but in a more special and spiritual manner, adopting

us to be his children ; this is, and ought to be a strong enducement unto this duty. What will encourage a child to come to ; and seek what he wanteth from such a person, if this do not, that that person is his father, and owneth him for his son ? Children need no more but this to set them a work unto this duty : And seeing the Lord hath advanced his people unto this great honour and dignity, to be his sons and daughters, in a peculiar manner, ought not this to encourage them to this duty ? Should not this hearten them to come to, and to call upon their Father ? All his rational creatures are obliged to come unto him, who gave them their being, and maintaineth and preserveth them in it ; *For in him they live, move, and have their being* ; and may be encouraged hereunto, even upon this ground : how much more should those, whom he hath taken out of the common state of mankind ; and hath brought nigher to himself, having honoured them with this glorious priviledge of adoption, to be his, and heirs with him, be encouraged to draw nigh to this God, who is become their Father, in a singular manner ?

2. The Lord's granting unto such as he hath adopted, a new spirit, a new frame and disposition, inclineth them unto God, which is called the spirit of adoption, *Rom. 8. 15.* Whereby they not only have access to the throne of grace with boldness, *Ephes. 3. 12. Rom. 5. 2.* But also have a spiritual byass God-ward, and a new propensity of heart to approach unto God, to make known all their desires unto him, to seek all supplies from him, and to communicate all their mind to him ; By this new spirit, they cry *Abba Father.* The Lord's granting (I say) this spirit, this new change, new frame, disposition, and inclination, is, and cannot but be, an encouragement to this duty. The Lord's putting a strong inclination in the young child to use the breast of the mother, saith, that the Child may, and should seek the breast, and weep for the mother's milk : This

natural instinct in the beasts is a forcible law, that cannot be intringed. What should then discourage a poor saint from this duty, in whom this new spiritual inclination is wrought: would the Lord give this new spirit to torment them? would he work them up unto this new, and strong inclination, and not withal allow them to follow the same, and to act accordingly? Would he give them this new nature, powerfully moving and inclining them to cry, *Abba Father*, and withal lay inhibitions upon them, that they should not do, what they are so strongly inclined unto? What dissuasives can prevail with a young Lamb not to seek to the dame? What can restrain a young child from desiring and seeking after the breast? What should then prevail with a child of God, to forbear to act suitably to this new nature? Sure me thinks, what ever discouragements appear unto the child of God, to keep him from this duty of Prayer, they should all be overcome with this one consideration, God hath implanted in me a new nature, and hath granted to me a new spirit of adoption, whereby I find my self as kindly, natively, and really moved to seek to God, as the new-born babe is inclined to seek after the breast, and what dissuasives should I hearken unto? What should prevail with me, to keep me back.

9. Moreover, if they should pretend want of skill and ability to pray; is not this encouragement enough, that the Lord hath granted unto them the spirit of adoption, to cry, *Abba Father*, *Gal*, 4. 6. to be a spirit of prayer and supplication in them, and to help their infirmities, to make intercessions for them with groanings, that cannot be uttered, *Rom*, 8, 26. What can now in reason prevail with them, to lay aside this duty, unto which they have this strong inducement, the spirit given unto them; to draw up and pen their supplications? Can they imagine, that God will not allow them to pray to him, when his own spirit is given unto them, for this very end,

to help them, in going about the duty? Should any thing discourage such from Prayer, as have the spirit graciously bestowed upon them, to frame their petitions to their hand? Should they be content to suffer this spirit to ly dormant in them, and not to do the work he is sent to do? Should not this consideration loose all their objections?

10. Further, the spirit is given to help us in our access and approach unto God: *We have access by the spirit unto the father*, Ephes, 2. 13. This is likewise the work of the spirit, and this being the work of the spirit, it cannot but be a strong inducement unto the duty. Who would not approach unto the king, who had such a gracious courtier to make way, & to bring them in before them, in his arms? Who would not be encouraged to draw nigh unto God, when the spirit of God is ready to take them by the hand, to lead them, or rather to carry them in his bosom before the Father? And who can think of being averse & unwilling to this duty when therewithal they must needs declare themselves unwilling of the help of the spirit? Can they pretend inability, who have such help at hand?

11. It is not encouragement enough unto this duty of Prayer; that hereby they have occasion daily to pour out their heart before God, as to a bosom-friend? We use to take encouragement from a person's being intimate with us, and a friend, that cleaveth closer to us, than a brother, to unfold our whole heart unto him and to hide nothing from him: And if the person be considerably great, and above us; yet this doth hearten us unto the using of freedom with him, that we find, we are friendly entertained, and he taketh it well, that we use freedom with him, and that he teacheth, we confide in him, as in a sure friend that will not fail us, nor deceive us: And should not this encourage us also unto prayer, that we know God will make us welcome, and take it well from us, that we dare confide in him, as in a sure friend, that will

will not fail us, nor deceive us : And should not this encourage us also unto prayer, that we know God will make us welcome, and take it well from us that we dare confide in him, and trust him as a bosom-friend ; and should not the advantage of having such a bosom-friend, to go to, in our strait, who can help, be our case what it will, be encouragement enough to set us on ? Sure, if we considered the honour that we are thereby advanced unto, beside the rich advantage, we could not but look upon it, as an argument, sufficient to overcome all dissuasives to the contrary. What courtier would not think it encouragement enough to speak to his prince, to know that his prince, will allow him, to be free and intimate with him in every particular ?

12. This is also a mighty encouragement, That we can never come unseasonably to God, come when we will : his ear is open, and he is ready to embrace us, and to take our supplications off our hand. the most willing prince, to hear a courtier, that is, may some time be out of case to speak unto : Our friend may be in bed, and unwilling to be troubled at mid-night to rise and give what we desire : But we can never come unseasonably unto God, he is never out of case to be spoken unto ; come we, when we will, he will not refuse us an ear, as coming out of time ; or as troubling him, when he is otherwise occupied, and hath some other thing to do.

13. As no time is unseasonable, so no case we can be in, will prejudice us of his ear, if we be willing to come, and do come in sincerity and uprightness of heart : it is true, sin and prevailing of corruptions may indispose us, and render us unfit for communion with God, if we harbour these evils, and delight in them ; but if they be a burden to us, and our grief, we need not think, that they will prejudice us of this priviledge, or give us ground to think, that we need not

not approach unto God, He will not accept of us nor regard our Prayers: Nay, these burdens of temptations, corruptions and guilt should incite us rather to go unto him, by prayer, that we may cast these burdens upon him, according to his command. O what great encouragement is this! That souls, in whatever condition they be, need not infer therefrom, that they are not allowed of God, to approach unto him; that no indisposition, no weaknels, no deadness, no faintings, no failings or shortcomings in duty, no provocations, will loose them from this duty, or excuse them from going about it: Nay, nor render their going about it unprofitable, if they be but willing to come, and to be delivered from these evils: Nay, the worst condition they can be in, should rather prove a strong encouragement, than be looked upon as discouragement: The Lord will not be the worse to be spoken to, that peoples necessities are the greater, which drive them to him, if they come, as they ought to do. Nay, the greater their necessity be, the welcomer they will be to him, if they come unfeignedly, *James. 1. 5.* Should not this then encourage us to pray, that we have to do with him, who will make us welcome, when we return, had we played the harlot with never so many lovers?

14. This should also encourage us to pray, to consider, that we have to do with a God, that can help us, be our condition never so desperate in our own eyes; he can raise the dead, and say to the dead bones live. It is a great encouragement, that we pray not to a God, who is farr off, and cannot help us; but to one, that can command salvation, be our condition what it will. The poor man is encouraged to go to the rich man's door; because he knoweth he can easily relieve him, and supply his present necessities: why should not this also encourage us to pray unto God, in our necessities, that he can easily answer all our desires: and satisfy us to the full, that we can seek nothing, that he shall account too great

or above his strength? One may come to his friend, and seek help; but tho' that friend be willing enough yet he may be unable to help him, at present: But we can never charge God amiss, or come to him, when he is not in case to relieve us.

15. Yea, the more enlarged the desires of our heart be to seek great things, if suitable to our case, and good for us, He is the more ready to hear and help: And this, sure, Should be a strong encouragement to this duty. We may go to our dearest friend in the world, and may be too indiscreet in our askings, and thereupon may be said nay; whileas had we been more sober in our requests, we might possibly have come speed: But he with whom we have to do in prayer, will make us the welcomer, the greater the things be we ask. As he will make us welcome, when we come to ask of him, what our subsistence in this world requireth; So when we come to seek spiritual blessings, and the great favours of the covenant. His countenance and his spirit, and all the spiritual and celestial benefits, he will make us the welcomer and more readily grant us these desires: When he said, *Matth. 6, 33. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you:* He gave us to understand so much, that we should rather seek of him, these great things, than what we should eat, or what we should drink, or wherewith we should be clothed; and that if we sought these great things, in the first place, he would give us them, in the first place, and the rest as to Casts.

16. This should encourage us also, that we have to do with him, who will not regard our worth in granting the thing we ask; if indeed it were so, that he would hear us no otherwise, than according as we deserve, we had little encouragement ever to come unto him, or ever to set about this duty. But seeing he granteth all for his own names sake, and for Christ's sake, and not for any worth considered in us. How should

should this animate us to apply our selves unto him by prayer? in approaching unto him, we are not called to plead our own worth, or usefulness, or any such thing, as a ground of encouragement to be heard; if we have to do with men, we may suppose the usefulness of these arguments, and thereupon ground our hope of coming speed: But poverty and nakedness, Indigency, and unprofitableness, are our best arguments: in pleading with God, & thence rather may we draw out encouragements: Who would not then be encouraged to set about this duty, who are sensible of their necessities of their unworthiness, and inability to do any good? He granteth all good, for his own names Sake and not for our sakes: *He bleſseth us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus*, Eph. 1. 3.

17. This is also a considerable encouragement unto this duty of Prayer; that we cannot come to God therein too oft: We cannot (to speak so) fash him: Nay, the oftner we come, the welcomer will he make us; for he calleth us to pray ever more, or without ceasing, 1 *Theſſ.* 5, 17. He would have us always in a praying frame, standing, and begging at his door, and at his door only. Is not this a great encouragement, that how much soever he hath granted us to day, we shall not fare the worse, if we go again to morrow; nay, every hour he will make us welcome: He will take twenty futes off our hand, in one hour. O! Who would not then take pleasure in Prayer! We may weary men, and trouble the best of our friends too oft, and be a burden unto them; and the oftner a poor beggar cometh to one man's door, he is not the better served; but rather the worse. But Go'ds beggars have a happy life, they will never get that answer from him, you were answered lately, and you must not be so answered always; but, by the contrary, he will say unto them, got ye your alms lately, and are you come again for a new alms, well, you shall not be said nay; the oftner you come to me, the welcomer shall you be.

18. The Lord will take it well off our hand, that we be importunate with him; that we give him no rest, till he grant the blessing we seek; all due distance, reverence and submission being observed: And this is no small encouragement unto this duty. The Lord himself hath taught us to be thus importunate with him, and told us, that this is the best way to come speed with him, by that parable of the man that gave his neighbour three loaves, because of his importunity, *Luke*, 11. 8. and of the unjust judge, who was content at length to satisfy the importunate widow, lest she should trouble him, and by continual coming weary him, *Luke*. 18. 5. See *Ijai* 62, 7. What should then discourage us from Prayer? His delaying to answer is, no ground of discouragement. for that should rather put an edge upon our earnestness, and cause us double our suits and requests: and we need not fear that he shall account us troublesome, or refuse us, because of our earnestness and importunity.

19. It is no small encouragement to this duty, That the Lord will accept of our feckles way of going about the same, when the heart is at the work, as service unto him, and as a piece of acceptable obedience, which he will take well off our hand, tho' he be a great king, and ought to have great and suitable honour and service performed unto him. When we are sincerely endeavouring to serve him thus with our spirits, he will accept of it, as service. It is said of *Anna*. That *she served God with fastings and prayers night and day*, *Luke*. 2, 37. The three children told the king, they *would not serve his gods*, *Dan*, 3. 18. That is they would not fall down and worship them, or pray unto them. O how wonderful is this, That the Lord should look upon our falling down before him, asking what we need from him, laying all our wants, necessities, desires, and our whole case before him; standing and begging at his door, as service done to him! How desirous would

that beggar be, to stand continually begging at a great persons door, if it were told him, that thereby he were doing great and considerable service unto that great person? How fain and glad would he be; and with what delight and complacency would he go about, and continue in that work? and what could all out, that could discourage him from that work? and what should discourage us to continue instant in prayer? What should make us weary thereof, or desirous to lay it aside? Is it good, that we should weary of God's service? Should we not take delight in serving him, night and day? And if we profess any pleasure in doing him service, why will we refuse to give him this service? Why will we refuse to tell upon him, and tell him, we cannot serve him, unless he help us with his grace to serve him, seeing he will ever accept of that, as service done unto him?

20. The Lord looketh upon prayer, as a special part of worship, that is due unto him. And this is considerable encouragement unto it. Yea, such a high account doth the Lord make of it, that it is sometime taken for all worship, *Zech. 8, 21, 22.* Hence we find the house or temple, that was appointed for the worship of God, called *An house of prayer, Isai. 56, 7. Matth. 21. 13. Mark. 11. 17. Luke. 19. 46.* How wonderful is this, that the Lord should put such an high value upon such a weak work, and should account the humble begging of poor and indigent beggars, a worshiping of him? Who, that hath any thing of the fear and knowledge of God in him, would not desire to be about the worship of God? Who, that considereth the work, doth not see a great reward in the very work of worshipping such a King, as is the Lord of hosts? And who, that hath their eyes in their head, seeth not enough in the very worshipping of this Lord God, to encourage them, and to carry them over many discouragements, unto the dutiful performance

mance thereof? And who then even upon this account, would not be encouraged unto this duty of Prayer? Who would not serve and worship the true and living God? And who would not therefore mind this duty of prayer? If we neglect this we cannot worship God acceptably, and the right going about this duty will be a noble mean to help unto the right performance of other acts of worship. And this should be sufficient to encourage us hereunto.

21. The many promises of being heard and of receiving what we ask (of which we shall speak more particularly afterward) are a great ground of encouragement, and are held forth for that very end, to encourage unto this duty of prayer, both in our text and elsewhere frequently. Would a poor indigent beggar desire greater encouragement than to hear That he shall come speed by asking, and shall receive all that he desireth? And what will encourage us unto this duty of prayer, if this do it not? When we have God's often reiterated word of promise, that our prayers shall not be in vain, but we shall receive all we ask, or as good, or better, ought we not to take courage? And when the Lord hath spoken this for this end, to encourage us, ought we not to improve it, and consider these frequent promises, to excite and stir us up unto this duty?

22. We see it hath been the constant exercise of all the saints in all generations, they have been praying persons; old saints, and young saints have minded this duty: And this should also be looked upon, as an encouragement; for we are not here to walk in an untrodden path, we are not commanded to do that which none ever did before us; but are set to walk in the common road of all saints. This should therefore, be an encouragement to us, That all the saints have gone that way before us, and all of them have found satisfaction therein, and have left a good commendation of the exercise behind them. It would be tedious

edious here to give instances, the scripture being so full: Only we would remember, That when we read of others going about this duty, it should excite us, to follow their example; When we read of their improving opportunities, it should mind us of the same duty; When we read of their prospering by prayer, we should remember, what is the voice of the Lord to us thereby; and that all these things say to us, *Mind this duty, and go about it diligently: For we see it is no vain work, to seek the Lord. No man seeketh his face in vain.*

23. If we consider how the Lord hath sometime heard the prayers and desires of carnal persons, such as are regenerate children of God, cannot but think with themselves, that they have great encouragement to mind this duty. Shall the Lord hear strangers; yea, and wicked persons, and enemies to him; and will he not hear and have respect to the desires of his own people? We see how sometime, he hath heard the prayers of such as were but Heart-strangers unto him, *Psal.* 78. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. and 107. 27. 28. (of which, and of other instances of this kind, we spoke before) and may not this be a strong encouragement to God's own children to go about this duty? If a child see his father giving some good thing unto another man's child, will it not hearten him to go, and seek from his father, what he needeth? He seeth that his father suffereth strangers, beggars; yea, and the children of his enemies & ill-wishers, to speak unto him, and to seek from him, what they would have, and that he giveth, and doth not upbraid; and may he not think with himself, Sure then, my father will make me welcome. he will not be angry at my coming; nay, tho' I have transgressed his commandments, and have not carried, as a dutiful child, yet I may hence take encouragement, and come forward.

24. Yea, which is yet more, the Lord hearing the cries of dumb beasts, and senseless creatures, and gran-

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 ting them what they need, is, and should be looked upon, as a very great encouragement unto his children, to come and cry unto him, *Psal. 145, 9. 15. 16.* It is said, *The Lord is good to all. And, that the eyes of all wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due season: He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.* And will he not then hear the cries and prayers of his own people? No doubt he will; for it is added. *V. 18. 19. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them, that fear him, He also will hear their cry, and will save them.* If a child see his father feeding his beasts, and giving meat to his dogs, and satisfied when they come about him, and fawn upon him, for a crumb: will he not think, That surely, his father will not be angry at him, if he come and tell him, what he would have, and seek from him what he wanteth?

25. We find, That the Lord hath such an esteem for Prayer, that he will have respect to it, even tho' it be but (as it were) Half-prayer; and the outward part, whereby he might be glorified with our tongue, or our glory is away; and the Prayer or desire is half (as it were) smothered within, and cometh not freely forth: as when it is said, That he heareth the *prisoners Groans, Psal. 102. 20.* And the *Sighs of the needy, Psal. 12, 5.* *The voices of tears, Psal. 6, 8.* Yea, he heard *Hezekiah, Isai. 38.* when his prayers was but like the chattering of a crane, or of a swallow or like the mourning of a dove, *V. 14.* A short sentence hath been as welcome to him, as a long prayer; as when the thief, on the cross, said, *Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom. Luke. 23. 42.* And the poor publican said, *Luke. 18. 13. God be merciful to me, a sinner.* Yea, when the poor oppressed Sinners could not so much as speak a short sentence unto God, nor groan, or sigh, he hath read a prayer out of their very looks. *They look-*
ed

ed to him, and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed, Psal, 34. 5. Jonah looked towards his holy temple, - Chap. 2. 4. And may not this be a strong encouragement unto us, to cry and call upon God?

26. So gracious is the Lord unto Praying persons, That he hath often heard their desires, when they have been accompanied, not only with weakness and infirmities, but with corruption, and sin; as when he heard that nobleman's desire, in behalf of his son, tho' he said unto him, *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe*, John, 4. 47. 48. 49. 50. And when he did condescend to Thomas, tho' he said in plain terms, *John, 20. 25. Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe*. And when he heard David's Prayer, even when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech, or Achish, wherein much corruption and unbelief appeared. See Psal. 34. And as when Moses vented much pettedness and malecontentment in his prayer; yet the Lord heard him; as *Exod. 5. 22. 23.* when he said, *Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil intreated this people? Why is it, that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh, to speak in thy Name, he hath done evil unto this people, neither hast thou delivered thy people at all*: Yet we see, Chap 6. 1. how graciously the Lord heard this. And again, when, *Numb. 11. 11. --- 15.* he had expressed much dissatisfaction with the Lord's way of dealing with him, saying, *Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? And wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? --- Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? --- If thou deal thus with me, kill me I pray thee out of hand, -- and let me not see my wretchedness*: And yet notwithstanding of all this corruption, the Lord graciously condescended to satisfy his desires, V. 16. 17. Other instances of this kind might be given; but these are sufficient to show, what kindness God hath for pray-

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er, tho' attended with much corruption : And sure,
this must be looked upon, as a strong motive unto the
duty. Will not this encourage us into it, to know
that God will pass by, and over-look much weak-
ness, and many failings in the performance there-
of.

27. It may also forceably move us, and mightily
invite us to this duty, to consider how, not only the
Lord is ready to grant the desires, which are put up
unto him ; but will even grant more than is asked ;
For, *He is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all
that we ask or think, Eph. 3. 20.* The Lord pro-
poseth this encouragement himself. *Isai. 55 6. 8. 9.*
Seek ye, (saith he) the Lord, while he may be found ;
call ye upon him, while he is near : And what is the
enducement or encouragement ? ver. 7. *For he will*
abundantly pardon. And again, ver. 8, 9. *For my*
thoughts are not your thoughts, --- For as the heavens,
are higher than the earth ; so are my ways higher than
your ways, and my thoughts, than your thoughts. Who
then would not call unto him ? Who would not
pray to him, who will not measure his returns, ac-
cording to our shallow petitions : but according to
his riches in glory, *Phil, 4. 19.*

28. It may likewise be an encouragement to this
duty, to hear, that not only the Lord will hear such
as call upon him ; but will anticipate their desires :
So ready is he to do them good, that ere their petiti-
ons be well out of their mouth, he will grant a re-
turn ; yea, even before they have presented their suits
unto him, he is ready to hear, and hath prevented
them with goodness and mercy. See, *Isai. 65. 24.*
And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will
answer ; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.
See *Gen. 24. 45. Dan. 9. 23.* They must needs be
very averse from, and unwilling to go about prayer,
whom this would not encourage.

29. So great an account doth the Lord make of
the prayers of his people, that when he hath no mind
to

to grant the particular, which they would ask, he will discharge them from the duty, and inhibit them from speaking any more to him in that matter : as we see he said several times to *Jeremiah*, *Pray not for this people.* Chap, 7, 16. and 11, 14. and 14, 11. So when *Moses* was intreating the Lord, that he would suffer him to go over *Jordan*, and see the promised land, The Lord said unto him, *Let it suffice thee, speak no more unto me of this matter,* Deut, 3. 26. Whereby the Lord would give us to understand, that to speak so, he drow not find in his heart, to say, his people, Nay ; And therefore would have them forbear to importune him, in particular, which he seeth not consistent with his glory to grant ; as if he could not hear them cry for that, which he might not give. This is a wonderful expression, which the Lord hath to *Moses*, *Exod*, 32. 10. and that even before he had begun to pray, *Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them.* So Deut. 9. 14. As if (to speak so) Prayer were able to bind God's hands, or so hinder him from doing what other ways he would do. Should not this encourage our hearts to fall in love with this duty ?

39. If we would consider what great things have been brought to pass by the means of prayer, we could not but see notable encouragement thereunto. It would be long to rehearse all the great exploits of Prayer ; a few instances may serve for this end, and these we shall only mention. By prayer hidden mysteries, that could not otherwise be made known, have been revealed, *Gen*. 25. 22. *Dan*, 2. 18. 19. By prayer great and strong armies have been defeat, *Exod*. 17. 11. 1 *Sam*, 7. 8. 2 *Chron*. 20. 4. &c. and 32, 8. &c. Prayer will prevent the ruin of a people, *Deut*, 9. 18. 29. *Num*, 14. and 16. 2 *Kings* 19, 4. Prayer hath opened the womb, that was shut, *Gen*, 30. 6. 13. 22. 1 *Sam*. 1 13. 20. And wrought miracles, 1 *Kings*, 13, 6. Prayer brought *Jonah*, out of the whale's belly, *Jonah*, 1, 6. 14, and 3. 8.

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 And opened the prison door to *Peter*, *Acts*, 12. 5.
&c. By prayer pardon hath been obtained, *Numb.*
 14, 20. Yea, miraculous supplies, *Judg*, 15. 18.
 19. As also issues from death, 2 *King*, 20. 5, 6.
 and 4 32. 35. And deliverance from enemies, *Neb*,
 9. 27. 28. *Judg*, 3. 9. 2 *King*, 13. 4. and 19. 20.
 1 *Chron.* 5. 20. and 20. 9. Yea, and out of all
 trouble, *Psal*, 34. 4. 5. 6. and 40. 1. and 50. 15.
 and 107. 28. and 118, 5. 21. and 120. 1. By
 Prayer not only are outward blessings had, 1 *Chron*,
 4. 10. *Gen*, 35, 3. 2 *Chron* 6. 26. and 7, 13, 14.
 But also spiritual blessings, Strength to the soul,
Psal. 138. 5. Labourers in the gospel, *Matth*, 9.
 38. And their success therein, *Col*, 4. 3. 1 *Cor*
 16. 8. 9. *Eph*, 6, 19. 2 *Thes*, 3, 1. Deliverance
 from the devil, *Matth*, 17. 21. and 15, 28. All
 had by prayer. And what needeth more encourage-
 ment?

C H A P X I.

Of the Object of Worship in Prayer.

WE come in the next place, to the *Second* part
 of the *Text*, which is the person who is here
 to be prayed to. It is true, this is not expressly men-
 tioned, in the words before us; but it is presupposed,
 and hinted in the words, and may be gathered, both
 from what proceedeth. and from what followeth, *to*
wit, That, the person to be prayed unto, is God,
 here denominated the Father, Of whom Christ hath
 been speaking in the foregoing words; and the end
 of Christ's answering their prayers is said to be, That
 the Father may be glorified in the Son. It is he also,
 to whom Christ will pray, verse, 16. And he men-
 tioneth their asking the Father, in his name, *Chap*,
 15, 16. and 16. 24. as he mentioneth their asking
 himself, Ver 23. For

For clearing up of this object of worship in prayer, or of the person, to whom prayer is to be made, we shall mention these particulars shortly.

First, God-alone is the object of all divine worship, and to him alone prayer should be made: For

1. God only hath these divine attributes and excellencies, which are requisite in the object of divine worship; And whereby he is to be looked upon and owned, as the only adorable majesty; so that his adorability resulteth from these divine essential attributes which are peculiar unto God, and are incommunicable to any creature whatsoever. He alone is JEHOVAH; and therefore we should come before his presence, *Psal.* 95. 1. 2. This Jehovah is a great God, and a great king above all Gods, and all the creation is his; therefore the Psalmist interreth, ver. 6. 7. *O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our maker: for he is our God, &c.* Prayer is a piece of that natural worship, that is due to God alone: Therefore when satan tempted our Lord to fall down and worship him: He repelled him with this, *Matth.* 4. 10. *It is written, (to wit Deut,* 6, 13. *and 10. 20.) Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

2. God only knoweth all our wants, and is privy to our hearts, and to the inward motions and desires thereof. *He knoweth the hearts of all men,* *Acts* 1. 24. *He searcheth the hearts, and knoweth what is the mind of the spirit,* *Rom.* 8, 27. *He, even he only, knoweth the hearts of all the children of men,* *1 Kings* 8. 39.

3. He only is God al sufficient, and so able to answer all our prayers, and to satisfy all our desires: For he is God almighty, *Gen* 17, 1. Therefore we should make our supplication to the Almighty, *Job,* 8. 5. and 13, 3. He only is able to satisfy the desires of all flesh *Psal.* 145. 18. 19.

4. He only is to be believed and confided in, and rested upon, upon the forementioned grounds; for

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no man can call upon a God, in whom they have not believed, As the apostle signifieth, *Rom, 10, 14.* saying, *How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed?* Whereby he giveth us to understand, That believing in the person, we pray unto, is necessarily prerequisite unto praying; and consequently, That we must pray to none, in whom we are not bound to believe; and therefore seeing we must believe and confide in none, but in God; we must pray to none but to him.

5. He only is our Father in Christ: and therefore to him only can we cry, *Abba Father*, *Rom, 8, 15.* *Gal, 4, 6.* And of him we have all we enjoy, *For in him we live move and have our being.* *Acts, 17, 28.* And he being upon this account, not far from us, we ought to seek him by prayer, *ver. 27.*

6. He only is the hearer of Prayer: And therefore to him should all flesh come, *Psal, 65, 2.* This is his prerogative royal, and we should not rob him hereof, by praying to any other.

7. He only can pardon sins, which is a main matter of prayer: *Micah. 7, 18.* And therefore he only should be sought unto by prayer.

Secondly, As God the only object of worship, is one: so this divine worship (whereof prayer is a special Part, being a calling upon the name of the Lord) is one, and of one kind: As the object is supreme; so this worship is supreme, and competent only to this supreme and infinite majesty; and therefore must be given to none else.

Thirdly, Though God, the only object of divine worship, be one essentially; yet the scriptures hold forth Three distinct persons, the Father the Son and the Holy Ghost, distinguished really from other by their personal and peculiar properties. neither of them being other, the Father not being the Son, nor the Holy Ghost nor the Son the Father nor the Holy Ghost, being either Father or Son. The Father alone begat the Son, *Heb. 1, 5, 6, 7.* The Son a-
lone

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alone is begotten of the Father, *Joh*, 1, 14. 18. The Holy Ghost alone proceedeth from the Father and from the Son, *Joh*, 15. 26. *Gal*. 4. 6. See moreover, for this difference and distinction of persons in the God-head, 1 *Joh*. 5. 7. *Matth*, 3: 16. 17. and and 28. 19. 2 *Cor*. 13, 14 *Joh*, 10. 30. *Rev*, 1. 1. 2. 4. 5, 6.

Fourthly, Tho' these three persons be distinct, as to their personal properties mentioned; yet all of them having the same infinite divine and indivisible essence and also being equal in power, glory and eternity, the Son and the Holy Ghost being God equal with the Father, as having in scripture ascribed unto them such names, attributes, works and worship, as are proper to God only, as these and the like scripture evidence, *Isai*, 6, 2. 5, 8, compared with *Joh*. 12. 47. and *Acts*. 28. 25. 1 *Joh*. 5. 20. *Acts*, 5. 3. 4. *Joh*, 1. 1. *Isai*, 9. 6. *Joh*, 2. 24. 25. 1 *Cor*, 2. 10. 11. *Col*. 1. 16. *Gen*, 2. 12. *Matth*. 28. 19. 2 *Cor*. 13. 14. Yet notwithstanding hereof, there are not three Gods; but One; for each of these Three persons are the same, as to essence, even the same one God, Co-equal and co-essential all of them, & each of them have the same divine nature, or essence and that eternally, equal and perfectly, none of them being more or less God, than the other.

Fifthly, Each of these Three persons, being essentially the one true and living God, are to be worshipped with divine worship, and invocated by Prayer, as the Father is to be prayed unto, so is the Son, and the Holy Ghost, 2 *Cor*. 13. 14 *Matth*. 28. 19. *Rev* 1. 14. *Acts*, 7. 59. Yet they are not three distinct objects of divine worship; but the object of worship is only one; for they have but one and the same essence, and so are one and the same infinite God eternally and essentially with the Father, and partake of the same essential divine attributes, such as eternity, infiniteness, immensity, omnipotency, &c: And it is God, having these essential divine attributes, that

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is to be invocated ; the Diety, which is one, is the
only object of worship.

Sixthly, Hence, which soever of the persons of the
trinity be named in Prayer, the same one God is pray-
ed unto : And when all these three are mentioned,
the same one Diety is worshipped. When one of the
persons is mentioned, we may not think, That the
other is less, even then worshipped, or called upon ;
because always the same Diety, in which are three
persons, is invocated, and not that person, as distin-
guished by his personal properties, but as having the
same divine essence. When one of the persons is first
mentioned, then another, and then the third, we
must not suppose, that the object of adoration, wor-
ship and invocation is thereby varied or changed ;
because that the same divine essence, or Diety is always
adored and invocated, and to the same one object of
adoration and invocation remaineth unvaried. And
when all the three are mentioned, they are not to
be considered, as three distinct objects of worship, but
as one ; for the same one divine essence is common to
all ; and this one divine essence, this one diety is the
only object of worship and invocation.

Seventhly, Christ the mediator is to be invocated
(we meddle not here with that debate, whether Christ
be to be invocated as mediator, or under that redup-
lication, properly and strictly so taken, because we
conceive this is not necessary to the matter of practice
and the difference may consist more in the different
terms used, or in their different sense and explicati-
on, than in the matter, and true meaning of the dis-
cordant parties ; so that a safe accomodation and re-
conciliation of the difference might be made by a
right explication of the terms, used in this debate, as
hath been manifested by the judicious and worthy Mr.
Durham on the Revelation, *Pag*, 15.) Christ, I
say, the mediator is to be invocated, and prayed un-
to, because he is God, and hath the same divine es-
sence with the Father, and the same essential attributes
of

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 of infiniteness, eternity, immensity, omnipotency,
 ubiquity, adorability, &c. as we see, *Acts*. 7. 59.
Luke, 23, 42. 43. *Gen*, 48. 16. That angel there
 mentioned, is Christ, or the second Person in the
 Trinity; so was that person mentioned *Gen*, 32. 24.
 &c. *Hos*, 12. 3, 4. See *Psal*, 102, 1. 24. 25. 26.
 27. compared with *Heb*. 1. 10. 11. 12. We are to
 believe in him, *Job*, 14. 1. And therefore to pray
 unto him. *Rom*, 10. 14, See *Rom*. 15, 12. com-
 pared with *Isai*. 11. 10. And here in the text, Christ
 promiseth to do what we ask; and therefore he is to
 be prayed unto, that he may do the same.

Eightly. This invoking and worshipping of the
 Son who is mediator, is not altered by our consider-
 ing of him, in our praying and approaching, as the
 Mediator, or naming or mentioning of him by titles
 agreeing to him, only as mediator: For notwith-
 standing hereof, it is God that is worshipped, and
 that person, so named or considered, is God equal
 with the Father, having the same divine essence, and
 divine essential attributes: And this worship is the
 same divine worship, that is given to the Father; for
 it is given to the same Diety, which is one and the
 same the mediator, as in the Father; and there is not
 two divine sorts of worship, but one: we cannot im-
 agine one divine worship inferior, and another su-
 perior, for there is not two distinct deities inferiour &
 another superiour, nor are there two distinct objects of
 divine worship, one inferior and another superior: And
 therefore the mediator is to be worshipped, with the
 same divine worship; with which the Father is to be
 worshipped, & not with an inferior; for his mediatory
 office maketh him not less God than he was before, or
 from all eternity; nor doth his taking on of man's na-
 ture lessen his God-head for even when man and the
 Son of *David*, he is the only begotten of the Father, &
 equal to him in power and glory: Nor is he, as man
 worshipped with one divine worship, & as God with
 another; but he, as to his person being God, and the
 person being worshipped he

he, who is man, is worshipped with divine worship ; because he, who is man, is the true and living God ; and so the person of Christ, who is now God-man, is worshipped, as the Father is worshipped : And this person is one and the same, however he be named and conceived by us, when we worship.

Ninthly. This worshipping of the mediator with the same divine worship, with which the Father is worshipped, taketh not away our making use of Christ, as the way to the Father, through whom alone we have access to the Father, and by whom, as mediator, we worship God, and pray unto him, and as the only ground, upon which we have access, and right to expect acceptance, in our addresses and prayers : for his mediatorsnip, or taking upon him that office, to make way for us unto God, doth not take away or diminish his God-head ; nor doth his being God, take away his office and work, or loose us from a suitable use-making of him. We pray then to the mediator, who is God, and as being God ; and yet with all, we approach to God through the mediator. Tho' the person be both God, and the mediator ; yet when we pray to him, as God, we make use of him, as mediator, & as the way to God : As he is the object of worship, he is considered as having the same divine essence with the Father ; as he is the medium, he is considered as clothed with that new relation of mediator, and with that new office, in which respect he is said to be inferior to the Father, and the Father's servant, and our high priest, advocate intercessor, &c.

Tenthly. As there is an order of subsisting among the three persons of the diety, among themselves, and an order of operation, in their works without, and as to us ; so, as the Father is the first person, the Son the second person, and the Holy Ghost, the third person : So, tho' the object of worship, being the Diety, which is common to all, but one and the same ; yet this hindreth not, but that we may, in our approaching

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proaching to this one God, in three persons, have
suitable apprehensions of this order in their substance,
and operation ; and so direct our prayers first to the
Father, as being first in order, not excluding the Son
and the Holy Ghost, but taking them in also in their
order ; nor yet as conceiving the Father to be chief,
in honour and dignity, and above the other two in
the matter of worship ; seeing all are equal as to es-
sence, and essential attributes, and seeing, because of
this, all are equally the object of divine worship, and
none more or less to be worshipped, because none
hath more or less of the one indivisible divine Essence
or Deity, the object of worship :. Hence we find
them named in order, *Matth*, 28, 19. and *1 Job*,
5, 7. So is the Father frequently mentioned before
the Son, *1 Cor*, 1, 3. *2 Cor*, 11, 3. *Gal*. 1, 3, *Eph*
1, 2. *Phil*. 1, 2. *Col*. 1, 2. *1 Thes*, 1, 1. *2 Thes*,
1, 1, 2. *1 Tim*. 1, 2. *2 Tim*. 1, 2. *Tit*, 1, 4. *Phi-*
lem V. 3. Though not always, *2 Cor*. 13, 14. And
the Spirit is named before the Son, *Rev*, 1, 4, 5. And
1 Cor. 12, 4, 5, 6. Lest we should imagine some
priority in honour and dignity, or some inequality,
as to what belongeth to their essence. and the one ob-
ject of worship.

Eleventhly, As the worshipping or praying to the
mediator, the second person in the trinity, as to the
Father, doth not hinder our use-making by faith of
Christ's mediation, in our approaching unto God, as
was shown above ; so nor doth our worshipping of
the Holy Ghost, the Third person in the Trinity,
with the same divine worship, with which we wor-
ship Father and Son, hinder us from use making of
the Spirit, in our approaching unto God, according as
he is promised, and held forth in the gospel. So
that in prayer, we are to come unto the Father, or
unto God, through the mediation of the Son, by
the help of the Spirit : for through Christ we have
access by one Spirit unto the Father, *Eph*, 2, 18. Ac-
cording as the blessings bestowed upon us of the Fa-
ther

ther, come to us through Christ, and by the spirit
Eph, 3, 16. with *chap*. 1, 3. 4, 5, 7, 11, 13, 14.
 See *1 Cor*. 12. 4, 11.

Lastly, *The person prayed to*, here and elsewhere, and particularly in the pattern, taught by our Lord is stiled *Father*: Not as if the first person of the trinity, or the Father, personally understood, were the only object of divine worship, or the only person to be prayed unto: For the Father is rather here to be understood essentially, than personally; and is taken for God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost: Only it denoteth an heart-warming relation, that God is to be considered, as now standing in *to wit*, The relation of a Father, to his own children, in a more special sense they being now made partakers of the privilege of adoption through Christ, and by the spirit: and unto the head, in a more general sense, as being their creator, preserver, provider, &c. and they his creatures, and rational members of his kingdom and great household: And with-all this denomination of a Father, pointeth forth the frame of spirit, that praying persons ought to have, when approaching unto this God, who is related to them, as a Father, of which afterward.

Thus have we endeavoured to clear up the object of worship, and who he is to whom we are to pray for so far as may help us in the right practice of this duty: what may be hence deduced, in order to our right and acceptable discharge of this duty, shall be spoken to in the next place.

C H A P. XII.

Some Mistakes in the Mind pointed at, which should be guarded against in our Praying to God.

FROM what hath been said, in the foregoing *chapter*, concerning the object of invocation, or the per-

person, to whom we ought to Pray, several inferences may be drawn, in order to our information and instruction about this duty. And,

First, we would hence be instructed to guard against mistaking Thoughts and imaginations in our mind, of this object of invocation. For when we are about the duty of Prayer, we are ready to entertain wrong thoughts of this God, and to conceive of him amiss: And thereby provoke the eyes of his jealousy, who is a consuming fire, and a jealous God: *Deut.* 4, 24. *Heb.* 12, 29. Therefore we should carefully keep our hearts and our heads, lest mistaking the object, the duty be unprofitably discharged. For this cause we would beware in our addresses to God by Prayer.

1. To think, That we can comprehend in our minds this object, which we invoke or get a full view or discovery of his glorious majesty, which is altogether unsearchable and incomprehensible: If we too boldly dive into this mystery, we may readily become vain in our imaginations, as did the heathens, *Rom.* 1. 20, 21. We are not able to search out the Almighty unto perfection. He is higher, than Heaven, what can we do, and deeper than hell, what can we know? the measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea? As said Zoopar, *Job.* 11, 8, 9. Shall we, who are born like a wild ass's colt, think to be wise, by understanding and fully comprehending this mystery, *Verse*, 12? It were safer for us, to satisfy our selves with a view of his back parts, and with a sight of him, in his glorious attributes, whereby he hath revealed himself, in order to our understanding what he is, in a saving and profitable manner; and instead of seeking after his hid glory and essence, to be taking hold of his name, styles and titles, and such expressions of himself, as he hath laid before us in his word, and therewith resting satisfied. When *Moses* that great man of God, with whom God spoke face to face, and to whom he revealed his mind,

in a more plain and familiar manner, than unto the prophets, *Exod.* 33. 11. *Deut.* 34. 10. *Numb.* 12. 6, 7, 8. When this *Moses*, I say, was desirous to see God's glory, his invisible being and majesty, he was told, That he could not see this and live, such a discovery, as he desired, would rather kill than satisfy him: And therefore he is bidden be content with a sight of God's back parts, and with hearing a proclamation of God's goodness, and glorious attributes, *Exod.* 33. 18, 19, 20. 25. Compared with *Exod.* 34. 5, 6. So should we forbear to ask or enquire after that, which is hid, as was said to *Manoah*. *Judges.* 13. 17, 18. and *Jacob* was tacitely rebuked for the like enquiry, *Gen.* 32. 29. Therefore, as we should not enquire after these hid secrets, further than they are revealed to us; so we would beware to suffer our minds to wade too curiously into this ocean, lest we create to ourselves confusion, darkness and distraction: And thereby instead of being helped unto the right discharge of the duty of prayer, which is possibly intended in this prying and diving, be more distracted in our minds, and unhinged and discomposed for the duty.

2. We would beware to think, That howbeit one God in three persons be the object of our invocation, we can come to a full discovery of this great mystery, or that such a full and clear discovery hereof is necessary unto our approaching acceptably unto God by prayer. It should satisfy us to know, That in the God-head, there are three persons; and that this God-head, which is in three distinct persons, is the object of our invocation, so as when we pray unto God, we pray unto one God, and to three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, although we cannot by our dark and terrene understanding conceive this unsearchable Mystery; or take up how it can be, that there is but one only God, and yet three persons; or have full comprehensions of this sublime and mysterious object, which we invoke. If we attain to full thoughts

thoughts hereot, as work up our souls into an holy awe, fear, reverence, admiration, and unto an holy frame, becoming such as worship such an insearchable one, as is this God, whom we are called to adore and invoke; It should satisfie: And if we win to the heart-affecting and soul-captivating faith of this revealed mystery, we should be satisfied, though we have not these particular notions, comprehensions or conceptions of this matter, that our curious prying spirits would possibly fain be at; seeing it is manifest enough, that our endeavouring after this, will but create unto us more perturbation of mind, whereby, by reason of our confusion, we shall be less in case to speak to this God, than otherwise we might be.

3. We would beware of forming or framing ideas, representations, shapes and resemblances of this God, or of the three persons in the God-head, in our heads or hearts, in order to our better conceiving and understanding, or taking up of this object, which we pray unto; we would beware to conceive of this one God, and three persons under any such shape or idea, because he is an object purely spiritual and invisible; And therefore all such mental representations, framed by our selves in our minds, cannot but derogate them his glory, and instead of helping us to suitable thoughts and uptakings of him, fix in our souls low, base, and unfuturate apprehensions of his majesty; yea, and take us off the worshipping the true and living God, and put us on the invoking of a *Likeness* to him, of our own making, which would be spiritual idolatry. It is remarkable, That when God of old, was giving laws and rules for worship unto the people of the *Jews*, by vive voice from mount *Sinai*, he let them see no similitude of himself: And *Moses* taketh notice of this, and mindeth the *Israelites* thereof, *Deut. 4. 12.* Saying, *And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words: but saw no similitude:* And teacheth them to improve this instructing dispensation; particularly to

infer therefrom, that the Lord will not be worshipped by the similitudes or likenesses,, *Verses, 15, 16, 17. 18. 19.* Take ye therefore good heed unto your selves (for ye saw no manner of similitude, on the day the Lord spake to you in Horeb, out of the midst of the fire :) Lest ye corrupt and make you a graven image, or the similitude of any figure. &c. So *verse 23, 24. 25.* Take heed unto your selves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord, your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, the likeness of any thing, which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee. Adding this reason; *For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, a jealous God:* Whereby we should learn to abandon such inward imaginations, lest we provoke this jealous God to anger, who is a consuming fire, instead of worshipping him acceptably. The Lord himself saith, *Isai, 40. 18. 25.* To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? And again, *to whom will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal, saith the holy One?* Shall we then frame likenesses and similitudes of him, who cannot be relembed, in our minds? What can we imagine the God-head to be like? *Acts. 17. 29,* See we not, how this course brought in all idolatry into the World, *Rom, 1. 19. 20, 21, 22, 23, 25.* They were not satisfied with a discovery of the invisible things of God, his eternal power and God-head, that might have been had by the things, that were made; But they fell upon their own imaginations; and therein they became vain and thereby, instead of more light, *their foolish hearts became darkned,* and they became fools? and then they came at length to *change the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image, made like to corruptible man, and to birds, &c.* and whence came all this *They changed the glory of God into a lie:* And what are all the imaginations and similitudes of God, that we can frame in our minds, but so many lies, seeing they cannot represent the invisible, true and living God.

4. As we should beware to fix our hearts too much to any particular apprehension or conception of God, under one notion or other, lest we miss thereby that awful frame of heart, which more general apprehensions of him, mixed with faith (as that he is; and that he is an incomprehensible, invisible, omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent Lord; That he is holy, just and righteous, &c. Tho' we cannot understand, or comprehend how he is so) Would help us unto: So we should beware to limite this immense and incomprehensible being unto any notion, which we at one time, or other, may have of him. Alas! how shallow are the deepest of our apprehensions? how low are the highest our speculations? can that, which is infinite, be fully comprehended by what is finite, yea and imperfect and corrupt? can imperfection comprehend perfection it self? As soon may we think to comprehend the whole ocean, in the hollow of our hand; as think to comprehend this infinite perfection by our shallow crazie, and feckless brains. Thus we should not attain unto futable thoughts of him, unto whom we pray: seeing he is infinitely above all our thoughts. *David* had noble thoughts of him, when he was praying unto him. *1 Chron. 29. 11. 12. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the Glory, and the victory, and the majesty: For all in the heaven, and in the earth is thine, and thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all, &c.* When the saints would declare their thoughts of God, as far surmounting their apprehensions, and as transcending their shallow reachings, they use these and the like expressions, *Thou dwellest in the heavens, Psal, 123, 1. Our God is in the heavens. Psal, 115, 3. The heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, 1 Kings, 8, 27. His excellency mounts to the heavens, Job, 20. 6. His mercy is great to the heavens, Psal, 57. 10. and 108. 4. He rideth on the heavens. Psal, 68, 4 33.*

5. We would beware, even in our thoughts and imaginations, to divide the object of our worship and invocation: Tho' there be three persons, in this one God-head, which we adore; yet we must not think, that there are three distinct objects of invocation: For thus we should not worship and pray to the true and living God, who is one, and but one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: And whether we name one or more of the persons in the trinity, in our prayers; yet still we must remember, That the object is the same one God: And far less must we imagine, that the divine person, suppose the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Ghost, which we name and mention in our prayers, is alone or chiefly prayed unto; and that the persons not named are either not at all prayed unto, or not so much: For this were to make a real distinct objects of divine worship, and not to worship the one God.

6. So would we beware to think, That one and the same kind of worship is not due to all the persons in the trinity; and that they are not alike to be worshipped and prayed unto: For all the three persons in the God-head, being one God, or having the same God-head essentially, are to be worshipped with the same divine, supreme worship, which is but of one kind, even such, as becometh the infinite majesty of God: And we must remember, that all our prayers must be made to the one God, who is the object of divine worship? and that therefore the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, being this one God, are all prayed to, and alike prayed to, when we are praying unto God.

7. Particularly, we would beware to imagine, That when we are praying to the mediator, we are only giving to him a peculiar and middle kind of worship, inferior to that, which is due to God; and not the same: For then we should necessarily grant, that he were not the true and living God; or that his acting on the relation & work of a mediator did degrade him

him, as to his diety, which were impious and false. Wherefore, our mediator being the true God, and having the same divine essence and attributes with the Father, he is to be worshipped with the same divine worship, with which the Father is to be worshipped, notwithstanding of his becoming mediator, and being now true man, or God and man in one person: For it is the person, we pray to, and this person is God; tho', in him, the humane nature is unseparably united unto the divine nature, yet the humane nature doth not subsist of it self, but in the God-head of the Son, to which it is now hypostatically united, so that the person is but one; and therefore that person being God, the worship performed unto the mediator, who is the Son of God; the second person in the blessed trinity, must be divine worship: Hence even the Son of *David* is prayed unto, and worshipped with divine worship; And that man, who is the Son of *David*, being also the Son of *God*, partaker of his whole divine essence eternally, and the manhood subsisting in the God-head, and the person being *God*, is worshipped with divine worship.

8. Therefore, because Christ who is true man, is true *God*, and as to his person is *God*, we would beware in our worshipping of him, to make any precision or abstraction, in our minds, of his humane nature, from his divine nature, as if one nature were to be worshipped and not the other: For our worship must be directed to the person, and this person is one and is *God*, and here we can make no abstractions or precisions, as to the object worshipped; but must consider Christ as one person, tho' consisting of two natures; And we must consider this one person, as *God*, because so it is, and the humane nature consisteth in and by the God-head, and not of it self: and therefore maketh no alteration in the person, the object of worship.

9. This praying unto Christ, the mediator, should not divert our thoughts and hearts from making use

or him, as mediator, and as the way unto God, or from making use by faith of his mediation and intercession; and so hinder us from coming to God in, through, or by him: Nor should our eyeing of his meditation by faith, and use-making of him, as our peace-maker, and way to the Father, so abstract our thoughts, as at the same time we should not look upon him as the object of to the same divine worship, and worship him accordingly, who is God: For these two are well consistent, and need not mar other: Even while he, as God is prayed to, the Soul may and should improve him, as mediator, or his intercession, for attaining of what is prayed for; and when the soul is by faith improving his intercession, he may & should be prayed to as God, so that our praying to him as God needeth not hinder our consideration of him, as the way to the Father, or to himself as God; nor needeth this consideration of his office, and improving of it by faith, hinder our respecting his person, in our worship, and praying to him, as God. Our considering of him, as the Son of God, having the same essence with the Father, in which respect he is the object of divine worship, is consistent with considering of him, at the same time, as mediator betwixt God and man, 1. *Tim*, 2. 5. And as he, by whom we come unto God, *Heb*, 7, 25. And neither of these should be prejudicial unto the other.

10. As most usually we should, in prayer, pitch on the Father by name: Yet we would beware to think, that he alone were prayed unto; or what ever person we had occasion to name, that he, and none other were indeed prayed unto. And tho' any of the persons may occasionally be named; yet we would beware to fix our minds so upon the person named, as to exclude the rest, or so as not to be withheld unto, or diverted from the consideration of the rest: For this would not be a worshipping of the true God, who is one as to essence, and three as to persons, or subsistences; And we cannot look a-right upon one of these persons, but withal we must
be

beled to eye the other: Hence he, who seeth the Son, seeth the Father; for the father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost in both. As in Prayer we are to conceive God to be one in essence, yet so, as conceiving withal, that this God, who is one in essence, is three in persons; that so in prayer, we may worship the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity. So whatever of the persons we pitch upon and mention, our prayer must be to this unity of essence, in trinity of Persons.

11. While we pray unto Christ, we would carefully take heed, that we imagine not in our minds, that hereby we address our selves to him as mediator, and then through him, address our selves to the Father: For hereby we make two addressees, in place of one, and each address hath its peculiar object. whereby neither is the addressees one, nor the object one, but both are different, contrary to the nature of divine worship, and to the oneness of the object of divine worship; Whileas we pray to himself, as God, one in essence with the Father, while we pray to the Father in his name; so that the addressees is, and should be but one, to God, Father, Son, and holy Spirit, in and through Christ mediator. As when we pray to the spirit and make use by faith of his aid assistance; in approaching to God, we ought not to conceive two addressees, first to the spirit, as he by whom we have access to the Father; and then upon God Father Son and holy spirit, as in and through the mediator. So by the spirit, aiding and assisting: And thus, as the address is one, so the object of worship is still one and the same; and this is the thing we should carefully heed.

12. In our mentioning of Christ in Prayer, we would beware of thinking, that he were more easie to be spoken unto, than the Father, and less severe and rigid. For when we pray unto Christ, we pray unto God, and the same divine essence, with the essential properties, are in the Son, and in the Father; And therefore considering Christ, as God, (as he must be considered when worshipped with di-
divine

vine worship) his no more easie to be poken unto, in prayer, than is the Father, nor the Father more giddy than he. For God is one, and it is God, Father Son, and Holy Ghost, that was offended by sin; & it is this God Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that is reconciled through the mediation and satisfaction of Christ. so that if this reconciliation had not been made, we could have approached to none of the persons with acceptance; but now access is made to all alike, because access is made to God, or to the divine nature, which is the same in all the Three Persons.

13. In approaching unto God by Prayer, we must beware of conceiving of God absolutely, or as out of Christ: For he is now to be conceived and looked upon, as in Christ, which may be imported, in his taking on the relation of Father: And we ought to come unto him, as to a Father. Hence Christ is called the propitiation *Rom.* 3. 15. as being truly that, which was typified by the mercy-seat, which was placed above the ark, *Heb.* 9. 5. *Exod.* 25. 21. Now as here in the type, God was to meet with *Moses* and commune with him, even from above the mercy-seat, *Exod.* 25. 22. and the priests were to offer incense, every morning and evening, upon the altar, which was put before the vail, by the ark of the testimony; before the mercy-seat, that was over the testimony. *Exod.* 30. 1, 6. 7, 8. So in the verity, it is in Christ mediator, that God will speak with us; and it is in him, that we must offer up the incense of prayer unto God, or with our eye toward him, for we must come unto God by Christ, *Heb.* 7. 25. and so must seek and find God in Christ. Beside, the God-head, considered in it self, is an infinite incomprehensible, yea, and inconceivable thing, our capacities are finite and cannot comprehend what is simply infinite; and therefore hath the Lord out of wonderful love and condescension, approached to us in his Son, and made himself more accessible unto sinners in Christ, who is therefore God and man in one person

person; so that coming unto him, we come unto God who is there, as in his accessible throne, and in his trying place: For the fulness of the God-head is in Christ, and dwelleth in Christ bodily, *Cor. 2. 9.* Wherefore who see Christ, see the Father, because he is in the Father, and the Father in him. *Job, 14. 9. 10. 11. and 10. 38. and 17. 21.*

To keep us from these mistakes, we would do well.

1. To have the truths reavealed in the word concerning God, and the mystery of the trinity fixed in our hearts, and deeply impressed there, that hereby our hearts being cast into the mould (as it were) of these truths, and having imbibed the same, may keep fast the impression thereof, and give a futable expressi-on, in approaching unto God, or carry a futable frame, and be habitually acted aright, in this duty. The want of right apprehensions, according to the word of truth, of this object of divine worship, cannot but be prejudicial unto a futable frame of heart, and deportment of soul, in this exercise.

2. Right apprehensions of the condescensions of love and free grace, in the gospel dispensations; and of Christ the mediator, in his person and office, would be a great help to us hereunto.

3. If the heart were rightly ballasted with the sense of God's greatness, majesty and glory; and were accordingly impressed with fear, awe and reverence; we would be kepted from many vain imaginations; and would not readily make extravagant or unfutable thoughts welcome, when they came in our heads, nor give them any warm intertainment: but would rather extrude them, as unwelcome guests.

4. If these three things were practically believed, and the heart impressed with them, we would be preserved from many vain imaginations, and mistakes. *1st.* That God alone is the object of divine worship; and that we must pray unto this God, who is one in essence, and is three in persons, the Father, the Son, and

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 and the Holy Spirit. 2dly. That Christ as mediator
 as God-man, the peace-maker, intercessor, and ad-
 vocate, is to be made use of by faith, as the ground of
 our access, the way unto God, through and by whom
 we must approach unto the living God, and be ac-
 cepted in our approaching; and so come and ask of
 God, what we would have, in the name of Christ.
 3dly. That the holy spirit, as purchased by Christ,
 and promised and sent by the Father and the Son to
 help our infirmities, be made use of by faith, as our
 helper and strengthner, that by his assistance, we may
 come unto God through Christ. All which is plain-
 ly and shortly held forth by the apostle, *Eph. 2. 18.*
For through him (i. e. Christ) we both have an access
by one spirit unto the Father. So that we must go un-
 to the Father (that is unto GOD, who is now become
 to us a Father in Christ) through Christ, by the
 Spirit.

C H A P. XIII.

*The right Manner of Prayer enforced from this, That
 it is GOD we pray unto.*

FROM what was said, *Chapter, XI.* of the only
 object of invocation; where it was shown, that
 GOD only is to be prayed unto; we shall now draw
 a *Second* inference, *Viz.*

That seeing prayer must be performed unto GOD a-
 lone, we should be careful in our praying to, or, in-
 vocating of GOD, that the duty be so discharged, as
 may be some way answerable unto such an object; we
 should endeavour to pray so; as remembering we are
 praying to God: So that hence, we may be put in
 mind of several things required unto the right man-
 ner of prayer, which we shall briefly mention. As,

1. Seeing it is God, who is to be invocated, and
 to whom we are to pray, our prayers should be gone
 rather about

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about in a humble manner. He is a great and holy
God, and we are but sinful dust and ashes; and
therefore we should approach unto him, as sensible
thereof, and as knowing what a great distance we
ought to keep. It is the desire of the humble, which
the Lord heareth, *Psal.* 10. 7. We know how
the prodigal carried himself when he returned, and
spoke to his Father *Luk.* 15. *And how the poor Pub-
lican* stood a farr off, and durst not so much, as lift
up his eyes, *Luke.* 18. 13. Which parables teach
us, how humble we ought to be, when approaching
unto God. *Abraham* did account himself, but dust
and ashes, when he was speaking unto God, *Gen.*
18. 27. And the woman of *Canaan* was content to
be accounted a dog, if so be, she might get a dog's
portion, *Matth.* 15. 26, 27. The Lord hath re-
spect unto the lowly, but the proud he knoweth a
farr off, *Psal.* 138, 6. The humble man is only in case
to wait at the posts of God's door with patience, and
to welcome what God is willing to give, were it but
a crumb; and also to improve, and make good use
of all that he granteth, and to be very thankful for it,
The humble person is most ready to honour God, &
to put a value and an high price upon the grace and
mercy of God. When beggars come before great
persons, they keep a due distance, and carry with a
sutable humility; how much more ought we to be
humble before the Lord, who are not only base and
lowly worms; but have highly provoked him to an-
ger; and not only have not deserved any good at his
hands; but we have disobliged him, abused his love
and favours, and have deserved off cutting in his dis-
pleasure.

Now this humility consisteth, in these particulars,
1st. In accounting ourselves really and unworthy
to get leave to stand before God, and so speak unto
him, as being sinners; and so such, as dare not so
much as lift up our eyes to heaven, or to draw nigh
unto God, being but dust and ashes, and worms and

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 no men, as *Psal.* 22. 6. See *Ezra*, 9. 6. 2dly.
 In accounting our selves unworthy of the smallest
 mite of mercy that ever a sinful creature got ; as
 knowing ourselves to have deserved hell fire, and the
 curse of God. 3dly. In willing and ready amplify-
 ing our own vileness and unworthiness, to the end
 we may be more ashamed before the Lord, as the pro-
 digal did ; and in aggravating our guilt and miscar-
 riages, as did penitent *Ephraim*, *Jer.* 31, 18, 19.
 4thly. In expecting all from God gratis, of his free
 grace and mercy, and for nothing in us ; and plead-
 ing nothing before him, but our own worthlessness,
 indigency, necessity and and miserable condition :
 As *Jer.* 14, 7, *Psal.* 25. 11. and 39. 12, 13. *Dan.*
 9, 3, 4: 17. 19. *Ezra*, 9. 5thly. In sorrow and
 brokenness of heart, for what we have done, and for
 the wretched condition we have brought ourselves in-
 to, through our own folly; the humble man is a man
 of a broken and contrite spirit, *Psal.* 51. 17. 6thly
 in being far from limiting the Lord, either as to the
 time of granting what we would have, or as to the
 measure thereof: Humble persons will put a blank in
 God's hand, and give him a latitude ; as all reason
 requireth. 7thly. In bearing with all discouragements,
 checks, challenges, rebukes, upbraidings, or what
 else we may meet with, in going to God. The wo-
 man of *Canaan* was not petted, when she was accoun-
 ted a dog. And the *Israelites.* *Judg.* 10. Where not
 discouraged from the duty, by the Lord's upbraiding
 them with their former miscarriages, and abuses of his
 mercies ; and threatnings to deliver them no more,
Ver. 11, 12, 13, 14. 8thly. In waiting with pati-
 ence, and without wearying, till the Lord be pleased
 to grant us the light of his countenance : A humble
 person will not run away, because he is not
 answered at the first ; but will wait for his alms. 9thly
 In welcoming heartily and cheerfully any thing, how
 small so ever, That God is pleased to give, with-
 out grudging or repining : Humble persons and beg-
 gars

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 gars, as they will not carve-out their own almes; so they will not quarrel, if they get but little. The prodigal would have been content, if his father had made him, like on of his hired servants, tho' he had not made him a son: And the woman of Canaan would have been satisfied with a crumb. 10thly. In being very thankful for the smallest mercies; and humble even after the prayer is heard: When *David* was heard, *Psal*, 34, 4. he became not the more proud, but accounted himself a poor man, *Ver*, 6. So was penitent *Ephraim*, after he got grace to return, more humble. *Jer*. 31. 19. 11thly. In prizing above all, God's mercy, pardon of sins, reconciliation with GOD, and his acceptance: The poor humble publican had no more to say, but, *Lord be merciful to me a sinner.* 12thly. In exalting GOD's free grace and rich mercy, for any favour received, how small soever: Humble souls will cry out, *Not unto us, not unto us, but unto the Lord be glory,* See how humble *David* admired GOD's goodness to him, *2 Sam*, 7, 17. &c. *1 Chron.* 24, 11. 16.

2. Seeing it is GOD, that we are to pray to, we should pray, *lifting up holy hands*, *1 Tim*, 2. 8. Such as draw nigh to GOD, should cleanse their hands, and purifie their hearts, *Jam*. 4 8. For that was a received and uncontroverted maxime and principle, which the man, who had been born blind, and had now his eyes opened by Christ, alledged, when he was, questioned concerning Christ, by the *Pharisees*, *Joh*, 9. 13. *Now we know, that GOD beareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of GOD, and doth his will him he beareth.* That GOD to whom we pray, is an holy GOD, and hateth all the workers of iniquity, *psal*, 5. 5. He is not a GOD that hath pleasure in wickedness, *Ver*, 4. *He is of purer eyes, than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity.* *Hab*. 1, 13. This holiness, required of such as approach unto GOD in prayer, saith not, that such as are not free of all sin, may not approach unto GOD nor that such, as are conscious of the ir own guilt.

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guiltiness, may not pray : For they are to pray for remission of their sins daily : nor that their holiness may be their ground of expecting the answer ; or made use of, as an argument to prevail with GOD ; for that expression, *Psal, 86, 2. Preserve my soul, for I am holy.* hath but this true import ; preserve my soul, for I am one, whom thou of free grace, bearest a favour unto. But this holiness required of such, as approach in prayer unto the holy GOD, taketh in these particulars, 1st. Such would beware of intertaining, harbouring and liking known sin, or being resolved to hold it fast ; for we see what the Lord saith of such. *Ezek. 14, 3, 4, 7. Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face, should I be enquired of at all by them ? Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them. Thus saith the Lord God, Every man of the house of Israel, that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols.* So the Psalmist tells us, *Psal, 66. 18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not bear me.* See *Matth. 5. 24. Isai. 1. 15.* Such sinners, as love their idol-sins, and will not quit them ; and such as go on in their wickedness with pleasure & delight, are the sinners that GOD will not hear. 2^{dly}. Such as come to GOD by prayer, should labour to have their hearts averse from sin, and endeavour to be delivered, both from the filth and from the power of it : This purity would be studied and minded : And thus should they labour to cleanse their hands, and purifie their hearts : Their purpose and honest resolution should be, through the grace of the Lord, to strive against every known sin, and to have their consciences sprinkled in the blood of Jesus. 3^{dly}. The apprehensions of the holiness of that GOD, with whom they have to do, should impress their heart with a kindly desire after an holy frame, when they are coming

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coming before the holy one of Israel. 4thly. There
ould be a care to observe, what ever God hath ap-
ointed for his worship and service, in Prayer; other-
ise we shall profane his holy name. 5thly. There
ould be a design to promote holiness by our prayers;
and therefore we should not pray for fostering
our *Lusts*, as *Jam*, 4, 3. 6thly. We must lay by
all passion inordinate, and such like distempers, and
lift up holy hands without wrath, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. And
without carnal fire, *Luke*, 9. 54. 55. 7thly. We
must also empty our heads of excessive carnal cares,
which will put us out of an holy suitable frame.

3. Seeing it is God, to whom we pray, our pray-
ers should be gone about with a suitable seriousness &
earnestness; not in a trival, trifling and superficial
manner, as if we were indifferent. whether he he-
ard us, or not, and whether he would grant us what
we ask, or not; for this would be as a real mocking of
the Lord. A king would think himself mocked, if
a poor man came to seek something from him, only
in a fashion, and showed by his countenance and car-
riage, that he were not very earnest in the matter, nor
very desirous to have the thing he asketh. So the
Lord will not look upon it, as right prayer when our
heart is not in our petition: nor will he regard our
prayers, when they are but lip desires, and are not the
desires of the whole heart: *David* cried with his
whole heart, *Psal*, 119. 145. The Lord took no-
tice, that the heart was away from the prayers of *E-*
braim, when they howled upon their beds, *Hos*, 7.

4. This is clearly imported in the Apostle's expres-
sion, *Eph*, 6. 18. *Praying always with all prayer &*
supplication, in the spirit, and watching thereunto, with
all perseverance & supplication. There must be prayer &
supplication, & all prayer and supplication, & prayer &
supplication in the spirit, & a watching unto all prayer
and supplication, & that with perseverance; yea, & with
all perseverance: So that every word here doth hold
forth emphatically this seriousness and earnestness. So
also that expression *Col.* 4. 12. --- *Labouring fervent-*

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ly for you in Prayers, or striving and fighting, as in
an agony, for you, in prayers: Here is no trifling,
but the most of seriousness, as is used by those, who
fight and wrestle for the mastery, who use all their
strength skill and dexterity to obtain the victory, and
fight for the life. This same is imported by that ex-
pression, *1 Thess. 3. 10. Night and day exceedingly*,
or more and more abundantly: As also by the fre-
quent injunctions we have to pray *without ceasing*, and
always, *Luke. 18. 1. &c. 1 Thes. 3. 10. and 5.*
17. Rom. 12. 12. And we shall be convinced of a
necessity for this, if we consider, *1st.* That it is God
who is serious in all his ways with, and towards us,
with whom we have to do: He doth not trifle with
us, and why should we trifle with him, in invoca-
ting him, and in the matter of his worship? *2dly.*
He is serious in his calling and commanding us to call
upon him; and why should not our obedience be an-
swerable? *3dly.* Do we ever find, that such as have
trifled with the Lord, in their prayers, have prosper-
ed in their way? Nay, have not such courses brought
on the wrath and displeasure of God? And hath
not God accounted himself as mocked? And how
should we think to escape his wrath, and to obtain
what we desire that way? *4thly.* Do we not on
the contrary, find that serious unfortunate wrestlers
have obtained the blessing? And should not this en-
courage us to be serious and earnest also? *5thly.*
The matters we are to ask in prayer, are great, ne-
cessary, and such as conduce to our eternal felicity,
and so cannot be wanted, or we must needs become
miserable: How untutable, yea, how fearful a
thing, is it, to be inditerent, coldrise and superficial,
in our asking of these things? *6thly.* Hereby instead
of a blessing, we bring on a curse upon our selves, be-
cause we offer a corrupt thing, *Mal. 1. 8. 14.* *7thly.*
So we do hereby bring on an evil frame upon our spi-
rits; for hence cometh it, that we turn indifferent,
superficial and luke-warm in all God's matters; we
quite hereby a formal, lazie and hypocritical frame of
heart

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heart which is a far step to atheism and all prophanity.

Now, as to this seriousness in Prayer, we would know, wherein it consisteth; & how it will be known. For clearing of which, we shall mention these particulars, 1st. Where this seriousness is, there is a preferring of this work unto all others, and a postponing of other work to it: What we are serious about we seek it chiefly and in the first place. *Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.* Matth, 6. 33 David was early at this work, when he prevented the dawning of the morning, *Psal*, 119. 147. And Heman, when he said, he would prevent God, *Psal* 88. 13 2^{dly}. there is a frequency in the duty: the earnest soul reneweth his suits, as *Paul* did, 2 *Chron* 12, 7. 8. And *David*. *Psal*. 55. 17. Seriousness is attended with constancy, and continuance in the duty. *Rom.* 1, 9. 3^{dly}. Where this is, there is a stretching out of the soul, and of the desires in the prayer; as *Acts*, 12. 5. They prayed there *without ceasing*. or, (as the word is) intensely, with intense or fervent prayer, as the word is rendered, 1 *Pet.* 4, 8. So *Acts*. 26, 7. Intensely, or with intenceness: This is imported in wrestling in Prayer, and fighting, as in an agony. *Col.* 4. 12. 4^{thly}. Where seriousness is, the whole strength is employed, as in wrestling in the *Olympick* Games; and so serious prayer is with the whole soul, and heart, *Psal*. 119. 145. 5^{thly}. So is there a continuance in it, a continuing instant in prayer, *Rom.* 12, 12. A pursuing incessantly, as dogs following the scent, with full strength, purpose and fixed resolution. 6^{thly}. This is accompanied with a vehement desire after the good thing sought, and with an holy impatience of delay; as *Plal*, 143. 7. And hence the soul crieth out. *How long? how long?* *Psal*, 13, and 80. 4. 7^{thly}. And therefore, where this seriousness is, the soul will not be off with Nay-says, or delays as the widow did importunate the unjust judge, *Luke*. 18. And the man his neighbour, who was in bed, *Luke*, 11. 7. *Jacob* would not let the angel go, until

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 he blessed him, *Gen.* 32. 26, 27, 28. *Moses* will
 not let God alone, *Exod.* 32, 11, 12. 13. *8thly.*
 Nor will the soul be put off with difficulties in the
 way, and discouragements; as the blind man cried
 the more, that he was forbidden, or charged by many
 to hold his peace, *Mark*, 10. 47. 48. And the wo-
 man of *Canaan* gave not over, for all the discoura-
 gements she met with, *Matth*, 15. But still renew-
 ed her suit. *9thly.* If at any time, they find their spi-
 rits grow flat, and begin to weary, and they faint,
 they set to again, and stir up themselves, as the word
 is, *Isai.* 64. 9. They shake off their drowsiness and
 laziness, and renew their cries, and fall to work afresh
10thly. They are careful to avoid and guard against, e-
 very thing that may prove an impediment unto them;
 such as too earnest pursuit after other carnal things,
 which steal the heart away Doubting of God's answer,
 and misgiving apprehensions in the matter, which
 fainteth and make h carelets, *Job*, 21. 15. Suffer-
 ing the heart to wander, rove and grow wild, while
 we are about Prayer; and the like, which bring us
 off our scent, or retard our motion, or weaken us in
 the pursuit. *11thly.* Such, as are earnest in this bu-
 siness, observe their success, and catch at every word,
 that may encourage and give hope; as the servant of
Benhadad did diligently observe, whether any thing
 would come from *Ahab*, and did hastily catch it, *1*
Kings. 20. 33. So did the woman of *Canaan* catch
 at Christ's calling her a dog, and sought upon that
 her crumb, *Matth*, 15. The soul in this case, is
 hearkning, to hear what God will speak, *Psal.* 85.
 8. *12thly.* Where this earnestness is, there will be a
 plying of all arguments, to press on the desire; and
 to strengthen their expectation of an answer: As
 we see in *Moses*, *Deut.* 9. 25. to the end; in *Daniel*,
Chap. 9. and frequently in the *Psalms*. *13thly.* So
 there will be a plying of the time well, and a laying
 hold on all occasions, and promising opportunities,
 wherein they may hope to come speed

the blind
 men

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 men did, *Matth*, 20, 30. 32. 33. Where this earnestness is, there will be a seeking of God, when he is to be found. *Psal*. 32. 6. and is near, *Isai*. 55. 6. As when God is calling to cry, and is saying, as it were, *What would you have?* *1 Kings*, 3, 5. 9. Or when he fixeth, fitteth and prepareth the heart to the work, *Psal*. 10. 17. Or when he bringeth home a word of promise, *2 Sam*, 7. 27. Or when he pincheth with straits, *Jam*, 5. 15. *Psal*, 50, 15. Or when he warmeth the heart, and bringeth the soul near to him, *Jer*, 30, 21. *14thly*. Where this earnestness is, it will be the man's work, and he will set himself to it: As *Daniel Chap*. 9. 3. *Set his face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication.* *15thly*. So there will be a laying hold on all encouragements, to set them on, and hold them on; such as their own experience, and the example of others and the like.

Yet we would know, that this earnestness taketh not away, nor impedeth that holy, sweet submission of soul, that ought to be: Of which we shall speak a word, in the next place.

4. Seeing it is God, we have to do with in prayer, we ought not to be sinfully bold, and importunate: nor too peremptor with this absolute, and great sovereign: But patient, and submissive unto his holy will and pleasure; as we see in Christ, when he prayed, that he might be delivered from that hour, and that the cup might pass from him, he withal submitted to the holy will of God, saying, *Not my will, but thy will be done.* We ought, I say, exercise patience and submission, both *1st* in reference to the particular we ask, leaving him a latitude to give it, or what he thinketh to be as good, or better. When God told *Paul*, that his grace was sufficient for him, he urged no more the particular he was asking, *2 Cor* 12. And *2dly*. As to the measure and quantity of the Favour: The woman of *Canaan* was content with a crumb; And the prodigal was content to be hand-

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led as an hired servant. And 3dly. As to the time &
season of granting the answer; seeing he will *hasten*
it in his time. *Isai.* 60. 22. *He giveth in due season.*
Psal. 104, 27. and 145, 15. *He exalteth in due time.*
1 Pet. 5, 6. and we shall *receive in due season,* *Gal.*
6, 9. This manner of way, we should the more care-
fully observe, because 1st. we know not many a time
what spirit we are off, as Christ said to *James* and
John. *Luke,* 9, 55. when they would have been
praying for fire to come down from heaven, to con-
sume that village of the *Samaritans*, which would not
receive Christ. 2dly. We know not what is best for
us, and are oft ready to seek that, which if granted,
would prove hurtful to us: many a time we know
not what we are seeking, as *James* and *John*, at a-
nother time did not know what they asked; *Mark*
10. 38. When they asked, that they might sit, the
one on Christ's right hand, and the other on his left
hand, in his glory, 3dly. We can plead for nothing
upon the ground of justice, having deserved nothing
but the curse of God; and so all he giveth is of his
own free grace and mercy, without and beyond our
deservings: And therefore we may not think to co-
mand him. 4thly. Many times we ask amiss, and for
corrupt ends, that we may ware and spend what we
ask, and would have upon our lusts, *James,* 4, 3.
5thly, Often times we are selfish, more minding our
own particular and personal satisfaction, than the pu-
blick good, or what nearly concerneth the glory of
God; as when the disciples in the mount, desired to
stay there, and build tabernacles, *Matth,* 7, 4. 6thly.
He is a great and absolute God, and doth all things,
according to his own mind, and will fulfill all his own
counsel; and he must not be limited by his own
creatures, who must be at his disposal in all
things.

These and the like reasons should move us to be
very submissive unto God, and to guard against this
limiting peremptory humour: which will 1st. prompt

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 us to seek what is not suitable to our condition; as
 when the two disciples sought to sit on Christ's right
 and left hand: And when the young son, who pro-
 ved a prodigal, sought his share of his fathers goods.
Luke, 15. 12. 13. 2dly, And to seek before we
 advise well what we are doing: as these in the wil-
 derness, who waited not for Gods counsel but fell a
 lusting, *Psal. 106. 13. 14. 3dly.* And to be ur-
 gent for the particular we would have, with a willin-
 ness to comport with what is worse, in the enjoying
 of that particular: As when the people in that wil-
 derness were so lusting after meat, that to have their
 fill thereof, they would willingly have comported
 with all the bondage of *Egypt*; And as tho people in
Samuel's days, were so earnest for a king, that to have
 him, they cared not to loose all their liberty, and be-
 came slaves, 1 *Sam. 11. 11. --- 19.* with *Chap, 19.*
 with *Chap. 8. 10. &c. 4thly.* Yea, to be so bent
 upon it, as to think nothing of all they got beside:
 As the people in the wilderness, despised and loath-
 ed the *Manna*, which yet was called angels food, so
 importunate were they for flesh, *Numb, 11, 4. 6.*
 As *Abraham* said, *Gen, 15. 2.* 'Lord God, what
 wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?' So, they will
 be satisfied with nothing, if they get not that parti-
 cular. *5thly.* This sinful importunity will turn folks
 brutish and unreasonable; What else did *Rachel's*
 speech to *Jacob, Gen. 30. 1.* saying, *give me child-
 ren or else I die,* import that such a transport, as was
 not rational? Could *Jacob* give her children? knew
 she not, that the key of the womb was in God's hand?
6thly. It will also urge and drive to the use of unlaw-
 ful means, that they may get their ends attained; as
 when the same *Rachel* had such a desire to children,
 that she would not wait God's time; but gave her
 maid to her husband, and pressed him to go in unto
 her, *Gen. 30. 3.* as *Sarah* did before, *Gen, 16. 2.*
7thly. It will press them to desire things unreasonably
 As the *Israelites*, in a fit, would go to *Canaan*, when

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 the Lord had said the contrary; and would fight a-
 gainst their enemies, that they might take possession
 can never pray as one partaker of the spirit of suppli-
 cation when the Lord was not among them, *Numb,*
14. 40. 41. 44. 8thly. It makes them so earnest, that
 they fall a quarrelling boldly vvith God, vvhen they
 are not answered at the first; especially, if their seek-
 ing be more than ordinary: As these. *Isai, 58: 3.*
who said as intending a process against GOD. Where-
fore have we fasted, and thou seest not? Wherefore
have we afflicted our souls, and thou takest no knowledge?
9thly. So importunate will they become, that if they
 be not answered, they lay aside the duty, and cry
 out with that King, *This evil is of the Lord, what*
should I wait for the Lord any longer? *2 King, 6,*
33. And to sing the same song with the prophane
 atheists, *Job. 21. 15.---What profit should we have*
if we pray unto him? *10thly,* when this humour
 prevaileth, it will make them fire-hot for that parti-
 cular, tho' it be not necessary, and very coldlike
 and indifferent, in seeking more necessary matters.

5. Seeing it is God, who is a spirit, unto whom
 we pray, our prayers ought to be spiritual: *He is a*
spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit, John. 4. 24.
 And therefore we are to pray in the spirit, *Ephes, 6*
18. This includeth these particulars. *1st.* That we
 be renewed in the spirit of our minds *Ephes, 4, 23.*
 and be built up a spiritual house, to the end we may
 be an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, ac-
 ceptable to God by Jesus Christ, *1 Pet. 2, 5.* For till
 this be, we cannot perform spiritual devotion, ac-
 ceptable to GOD, who is a spirit. The carnal-minded
 man: or the natural man, who is not made partak-
 er of this spirit of grace; For this spirit will
 be a spirit of grace, before he be a spirit of supplicati-
 ons. *2dly.* That we have a spiritual frame &
 disposition, while we go about prayer. A saint may
 be in a very carnal frame, and rather drunk with
 wine, or other carnal delights, than filled with the spi-
 rit,

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spirit, *Eph. 5. 18.* And while they are so, they cannot be spiritual in their prayers: for their prayers will smell of their frame and carry with them a tincture of their present carnal disposition. *3dly.* That our petitions be framed by the spirit, *who helpeth our infirmities, Rom. 8. 26.* and maketh within us *intercession, for us ibid.* our prayers, when spiritual are wrought within by the spirit: as that word *James 5. 16.* rendered *effectual fervent* is but one in the original, and would import a prayer possessed with the spirit; for the word is usually used of such as are possessed with a spirit: And so it would denote a prayer having the spirit within it, wholly possessing it, or a prayer wrought by the holy spirit, wholly possessing the man, a prayer wrought within; as the Lord is said *to work in us, Phil. 2. 13.* *4thly.* That they be active lively, and piercing, and not dead and lumpish. A spirit is a lively active thing, and so is a spiritual prayer; and so should the prayer be, that is performed to the Lord, who is a spirit; and not a dead lump without life, that always sinks to the ground, and cannot mount up; Hence we should be fervent in spirit, *serving the Lord. Rom. 12. 11.* *5thly.* That our soul should be at work in prayer, and not our body only, otherwise it shall be but fleshly, and not spiritual: Bodily service, and not soul, or spiritual service. We should glorify God, not only in our bodies, but in our spirits, *1 Cor. 6. 20.* And *we should be holy, both in body and spirit* (as is said of the virgin, *1 Cor. 7. 34.*) *and sanctified wholly, and our spirit, soul and body should be blameless, 1 Thel 5. 23.* Prayer being the work of the whole man; the soul and spirit, which is the chief part, should not be wanting in prayer, otherways we shall not be in case to worship him, who is a spirit. *6thly.* That we must approach unto God in prayer, by the spirit, as carried in his arms: for our access to this God, who is a spirit, is by *the spirit. Ephes, 2. 18.* *7thly.* That most of our desires or the most earnest of our suits should be for spiritual things.

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things. *Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness,* Matth. 6. 33. 8thly. That when we are seeking temporal things, (which is also lawful in its due place; as the Lord hath taught us to seek *this day our daily bread*) it should be in its due subordinate place, and with a spiritual frame of heart, as intending to imploy these temporal things for God's glory. 9thly. That our end and design in all should be spiritual, that God's name may be glorified, His kingdom may come, and he may be obeyed and exalted; and we put in case to serve him acceptably. 10thly. That our motives to prayer, or to the putting up of particular petitions be spiritual, and heavenly; not carnal, low and selfish.

6. Seeing it is God, that we pray unto, we should beware to pray so, as thinking, That by our prayers and petitions, we could really change God's mind, and move him to alter his purpose and resolution, or make him willing to give or do that, which otherwise, or before, he was unwilling to give, or to do: For our God is the true God, and therefore is unchangeable in himself, and in all his purposes and resolutions; *He is in one mind, and who can turn him?* Job, 23. 13. *He doth whatsoever he pleaseth,* Psal. 115. 3. and 135. --- 6. When we are speaking unto men, we may really by motives and arguments move them, and work them up to that, which they were not inclined unto, and so may alter their judgments and inclinations; but it is not so with God, who is every way perfect, and immutable. *Jam,* 1, 17. *Mal.* 3. 6. And doth all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, *Eph.* 1. 11. Therefore our prayers must flow from another principle, than from such a false and unworthy supposition as this is: And must be looked upon, and gone about, as a commanded duty, and as a mean appointed of the Lord, whereby such and such mercies and favours are to be obtained; and whereby we ourselves are wrought up
unto

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unto a more confident dependance upon God, and
unto humility, and our hopes and desires are increas-
ed : and so we be put into a posture of receiving the
good things we seek, more to God's glory, and to
our own spiritual advantage.

7. Seeing it is God to whom we pray ; Therefore
our prayers should be in truth and in sincerity : He is
a spirit and will be worshipped *in truth*. *Joh, 4. 23.*
He *desireth truth in the inward parts*. *Psal, 51. 6.*
He hateth hypocrisie, and double dealing, being a
God of truth : And beside, *The double minded man*
is unstable in all his ways, and that man need not think
that he shall receive any thing of the Lord, *Jam, 1. 7.*

8. Our prayers should not come out of feigned lips,
Psal. 17. 1. Upon this account should all our pray-
ers be performed in uprightness, truth, and sincerity:
And therefore, 1st. We should hide nothing from
God, but *pour out our hearts* *Psal, 62. 8.* And *de-*
clare all our ways *Psal, 119. 26.* As David desired
God to search him, and discover himself to himself,
Psal. 139. 23. 24. 2dly. Our lips should not go a-
gainst, or without our hearts ; that is, we should
not pray for that mercy, which our heart desireth
not to have, nor to be delivered from that sin, which
we desire to hold fast, for this were to mock God,
as if he knew no more than an idol, what abominati-
on we harboured in our hearts. 3dly. We should
harbour nothing wittingly and willingly in our hearts,
that may hinder our return of prayer, or our accep-
tance ; for if we regard iniquity in our heart, God
will not hear, *Psal, 66. 18.* See *Job. 11. 13. 14.*
15. *Matth. 5. 23.* 4thly. We should be ready to
use all other means lawful and commanded, to come
by what we desire in prayer : If we pray for grace,
and against sin, our lives should declare, That we
desire grace, and hate sin ; that we strive against sin,
and labour for grace : for if we set up our idols in our
hearts, and put the stumbling block of our iniquity
before our face, our prayer to God will be in vain,
Ezek.

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Ezek. 14. 3, 4, 6, 7, 8. *5thly.* We should be-
ware of all affection in prayer: Hypocrisie maketh
prayer become really a stage-play: The mouths of
such, as deal herein hypocritical, speak great swell-
ing words, as *Jud.* V. 16. When there is nothing
in the heart suitable thereunto, or correspondent
therewith; We should not think to complement
with God, and give him goodly words, and think
to please him with Rhetorical flowishes, pleasant
cadencies, and ingeminations; for such expressions
are in the Lord's eyes, nothing but vain repetitions,
Matth. 6. 6, 7. The lips of the saints are like thre-
ads of scarlet, pure, single, and fine, *Cant.* 4. 3-
6thly. We should singlely aim at the glory of God,
confess our sins, that he may be justified when he
speaketh, and clear when he judgeth, *Psal.* 51. 3, 4.
And thus pray, That he may be exalted with our
tongue, *Psal.* 66. 17. And not that we may sound
forth our own praises and commendations, as did the
Pharisee. *Luke.* 18. 10, 11, 12. Our end should
be single and sincere, and not that we may be seen of
men, as they did. Tho' we may intend our own
good, or our own salvation; yet not principally,
nor with exclusion of God's glory; but in conjunc-
tion therewith, and in subordination thereunto. *to*
wit, that he in our salvation may be glorified we
should seek remission of sins, not meerly that we
may be free of the terrors of conscience, and the like,
but principally, that we may have access to his fa-
vour, and that he may be glorified therein: we should
seek grace, not that we may be satisfied: but that
we may be in case to serve and glorifie him. *7thly.*
Our affections should be moved and wrought upon
suitably to our petitions: As if we pray against sin,
we should detest it, and loath it: If we pray for grace,
we should love and prize it at an high rate: If we
pray for others, we should have a kindly sympathy
with them in their afflictions; and so pray, as bound
with them in bonds, & as suffering with them: It
we

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we pray for the coming of Christ's kingdom, we should have a great liking thereunto, and prefer *Zion* to our chief joy. 8^{thly}, Thus we should pray with our whole soul, spirit and mind, with judgment and understanding, with will and affections; for an hypocrite is a divided man: But the sincere man is wholly what he is. Thus the sincere saints seek the Lord with their whole soul, *Psal.* 119. 58. *Isai.* 26. 6. 9^{thly}. Our whole strength should be at this work: what we do herein, we should do with our might, *Eccles.* 9. 10. without reserves: Prayer should not be as a by-work, but gone about really, seekfully & to purpose, as serving the Lord with our spirits, *Rom.* 1. 9. 10^{thly}. We should not labour to express, or signifie more with our words, than is really within: This straining to speak more than is, or otherwise than it is indeed, in the present frame of our hearts, is not sincere and single dealings: Our expressions should not be such, as import more sense & feeling, more grief and fear, more love and desire, than indeed there is. A heap of words without corresponding motions of the heart, expressed thereby, are no sincere prayer. *David* opened his mouth and panted in prayer, because he longed for Gods commandment, *Psal.* 119. 131.

8. Seeing we speak unto God in prayer, we ought to be present in our minds; they should not be in the mean time, with the eyes of the fool, at the ends of the earth. It is an unseemly thing for one, while speaking to a king, or great person, to be gazing upon every thing about him; so it is unseemly for us while speaking unto God in prayer, to have our minds roving after vanity, or sinful objects: yea, or after lawful objects, because then unseasonable, and then they prove but diversions to draw away our hearts, through the slight and cunning of satan, who is busie at that time, to cast in distracting diverting, or jumbling thoughts to the end our heart and intention may be drawn away and divided, and we brought off
the

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the scent, we were upon, and so made more remiss
and formal in our prayers: Therefore we should
guard against the wandring of our hearts, by remem-
bring what we are about; what an one he is, before
whom we are: How satan thereby gaineth advan-
tage against us: How hereby we loose our earnest
frame, and our prayer die in our mouth: How our
hearts are diverted, and so our lips and tongues speak
words, but our hearts speaketh not.

9. Because it is God we are praying unto; there-
fore we should be fervent in prayer, and zealous, as
serving such a great king therein, and should not
turn formal and superficial. This fervency should be
true spiritual fervency; and it will appear by these
things. *1st.* our hunger and desire will be greater at-
ter spiritual things, than after carnal things; more
for graces, than for gifts; more for blessings that will
fit us for God's service. and to be for his glory, than
for what may commend us to others, *Matth. 6. 33.*
Psal. 4. 6. *2dly.* This true fervour will set us as
much (if not more) upon secret and private prayers,
as upon publick before others: But when a spirit of
formality prevailleth, we love to be seen; and there-
fore we desire mainly to pray before others, where we
may be commended. *3dly.* Where true fervour is,
it will appear in secret, as much, if not more, than
in more publick prayers: If we seem fervent in pub-
lick, while praying before others; but flat and formal
dead and lazie in private, our zeal and fervour is not
good. *4thly.* If our zeal be for God and his glory,
we will be fervent in our prayers for very enemies,
that they may be converted; and thus the power of
Christ may be exalted, the riches of the freedom of
grace preached forth, the kingdom of Christ enlarg-
ed, and satan foiled. *5thly.* Where this true zeal in
prayer is, there will be more care to have the heart
keept warm, the affections boiling, and the desires
inward flaming: than to have expressions high and
raised: And when the flaming of the heart ceaseth,
there

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there will be rather a cutting of prayer short ; than a
keeping up the form, with empty and lifeless words.
6thly. There will be a care to shake off all sluggishness
or what may make us move and run in this exercise
slowly, all sleepinets and drowsiness, that make us
pray, as if we were not praying: And therefore the
first thing that such will aim at in prayer, will be to
get their heart awakened, and rowzed up; and so
put in case to speak with life and fervour.

10. Because it is to God, who is great, holy, and
jealous God, and will not have his name profaned,
or taken in vain; therefore we should not be rash, in-
considerate, or hasty in rushing in before the Lord's
presence ; but should have our hearts composed, and
our spirits right, that we may approach with due de-
liberation and circumspection. We see what advice
the wise man giveth us, in this matter, *Eccles.* 5, 2.
*Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be
hasty to utter any thing, (or word) before God, for
God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let
thy words be few.* Hence we are commanded, to
watch unto prayer. *Eph.* 6, 18. *1 Pet.* 4. 7. And
to watch and pray, *Matth.* 26. 40. 41. Now for this
cause we should labour, *1st.* To have our spirits
wakened: a praying man must be a waking man :
For a sleepy man can hardly speak sense, or know
well what he saith, we must be vigilant and *sober*, &
so watch unto prayer, *1 Pet.* 4, 7. *2dly.* We should
labour to have our hearts freed from the hurry of the
things of this world : A man cannot speak compo-
sedly and deliberately in a croud and noise of people :
Nor can vve pray to God, if our hearts be surroun-
ded vvith the noise and cries of the cares of this vvorld;
for they vvill so distract us, that vve shall hardly
know vvhat vve are saying. *3dly.* We should be
composed, as laying aside other cares, even of law-
ful things, as knowing in whose presence vve come:
It is not seemly to see a man all defiled vvith his or-
dinary vvork, rushing into the presence of a great
King

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 King: no more is it seemly, for us, (in solemn prayer of vvhich vve here speak; for in ejaculatory prayers vve may send these post to heaven in the midst of our *work*; yet vwith the heart sleeping from our *work* for that instant) vvhile our *work* is scarce out of our hands, rushing into the presence of the great King. When our hearts are fixed and prepared, than are vve in best case, as to praise, *Psal.* 57. 7. and 108. 1. So to pray, *Psal.* 10. 17. *4thly.* We should be sure to observe the frame of our spirit, to see if it be in any lively, fit and sutable frame: See if all vvithin us be in tune, that there be no jarring, no lust, nor distemper, nor faithless doubting, or heartiesness, that vvill make us run in vain. *5thly.* Particularly vve should see vvhat spirit vve are of, that there be not any perturbing affection, inordinate motion of heart, unlavvful desires riveted in the soul: For if that be, vve cannot pray acceptably. If our hearts be pre-occupied vvith the excessive cares of the vworld, vvith inordinate desires after any lavvful thing, or vvith affection to any lust, vve are in no fit posture to speak unto God in prayer. *6thly.* We should see that our hearts be in some measure under the sutable apprehensions of his great and glorious majesty, vvith vvhom vve have to do; and of our ovvn vvants and necessities; othervvise vve shall not be in case to speak to God as humble suppliants. *7thly.* We should have our eye on all inviting occasions, that vve let not such slip avway: When the Lord by his dispensations is calling and inviting, vve should yield, and so carry as such, as are standing at some great person's door, use to do, vvho, vvhen ever the door is opened, or half opened, or they can get their eye upon the person, are ready to put the petition in his hand.

11. Seeing vve are speaking to God in prayer, vve should be careful and vvatchful, vvile vve are about prayer, lest instead of obtaining a blessing, we procure a curse. We are commanded to continue in prayer,
 and

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and to watch in the same. Col 4. 2. And that because
1. He is an holy, pure and heavenly God, with
whom we have to do; and will not be mocked, and
he is of purer eyes, than to behold evil; and there-
fore we should be careful, lest by our miscarriage we
provoke him to anger, instead of getting the light of
his countenance and favour; as we see *Psalm*, 78, 18.
2. *2dly.* Satan is ready and busie then to distract,
distemper, divert and trouble us, with sinful thoughts
and suggestions, that we may be discomposed,
and out of a suitable praying frame, and so may sin a-
gainst God, and wrong our own souls: for he go-
eth always about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom
he may devour: And therefore we should be upon
our guard. *3dly.* Our hearts are naturally tricky, false,
and deceitful, and prone to step out of the way, and
forget a praying frame: How quickly may vain
thoughts get lodging, and so distract us? How quickly
may unbelief get entry, and so faint us, and discour-
age us? How hard is it to keep the heart fixed un-
to praying dispositions? *4thly.* By neglect of this
watchfulness, we prejudge our selves much; for then
we cannot lay hold on, and improve such assistances,
as the spirit will give in prayer: He suggesteth in
prayer many suitable and seasonable particulars, to be
presented unto God; but when we watch not, we
must necessarily suffer these to pass: So he sug-
gesteth and presenteth spiritual motives and encoura-
gements to renew our suits, or whereupon we may
conceive hope, and have our faith strengthened; all
which we must miss, by neglecting this watchfulness,
not to mention the *items* of returns, which he is
pleased to give sometimes in prayer. *5thly.* If we be
not careful to watch in prayer, we may quickly turn
dead, formal and superficial in our service, and so per-
form heartless, lifeless and dead service unto him, who
will not accept of the blind and lame at our hands,
or a female, when we should offer a faultless
male.

Now, this watching in prayer, or careful observing of our selves then, includeth these things ; 1st. That we be careful to keep our hearts in a spiritual, lively, sincere and zealous frame ; and that we should rather be rising higher in these dispositions, than waxing more remiss and slack : That the sense of our need and our desire after the blessings we ask. &c. rather be come stronger than weaker. 2^{dly}. That when any thing is wrong in the soul, we foster it not ; but instantly labour to remedie it, by putting it over on God to help. 3^{dly}. That we suffer not wandring thoughts to lodge there ; but presently, on the first observation, hush them to the door, and call our soul to advert and to be present. 4^{thly}. That we suffer not unbecoming irreverent, unbelieving apprehensions, when suggested, or any thing of that kind, that satan will cast in, to put us out of frame to get any welcome or house room with us : 5^{thly}. That we be careful, that heart and tongue go together, and keep an harmony ; that is, That we express not what our heart thinketh not ; that we feel not what our heart desireth not : And that there be no more of life, sense, affection, and desire in the expressions, than are in the heart, lest the service be cast as hypocritical. 6^{thly}. As also, that what we utter with our tongues be suitable to his majesty ; & not offensive : That we have no unfavoury, or impertinent speeches : *David* was sensible of this, when he prayed that God would set a watch before his mouth, & keep the door of his lips. *Psal*, 141, 3. 7^{thly}. That the heart be kepted in an open receiving and welcoming posture ; that is in readiness to entertain thankfully, all the supplies assistances and suggestions of the spirit of God, crying in us, *Abba Father*. and helping our infirmities : As also, to welcome and improve all the encouragements to hope, and believe a return ; and all the suggested motives and grounds to renew and press our suits. 8^{thly}. That the Heart be kepted in an humble, waiting and hearkning

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ning posture, to see what God the Lord will say;
and what return he giveth: For sometimes he will
think good to insinuate, with a satisfying sweetness,
his acceptance of the desire; and his purpose to give
a satisfying answer in due time.

12. Because it is the Lord, with whom we have to
do in prayer; therefore we should pray with under-
standing, and a well grounded knowledge, that what
we ask in prayer be agreeable to the revealed will of
God, for the real good of ourselves and others, and
for the glory of God: Otherwise we can expect no
return, but what shall be contrary to our sinful, rash
and inconsiderate desires. It is a fearful thing, to seek
of God to fulfil our sinful and wicked desires, and to
do the devil's work. Therefore, 1st. We should
be well acquainted with the will of the Lord, reveal-
ed in his word. 2^{dly}. We should be sound in our
judgments, not entertaining any error or mistake;
for according to these will our prayers be. 3^{dly} We
should labour to be free of any carnal interest, for that
will byass us, and our prayers will incline towards
that byass. 4^{thly}. So would we labour to be kept
from sinful passions; for these will quickly blind our
judgment, and so pervert and corrupt our prayers,
as when *James* and *John* would have prayed for fire
from heaven upon that city of the *Samaritans*, that
refused to give Christ lodging.

13. Because it is to God that we pray; therefore
we should have right apprehensions of him, and faith
in his nature and attributes: For *he that cometh to
God, must believe that he is, &c.* Heb, 11 6. If
we have unbelieving or unsutable apprehensions of
God, we cannot pray to him aright, because we
have no confidence to find our supplies in him, nor
can we keep a due distance; nor can our suits be pre-
sented with any grounded hope of coming speed.
Therefore should we have the faith of God fixed in
our souls, and of his glorious and encouraging titles
and attributes: Such as, 1st. His being the true and
living

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living God, and the fountain of life, and so a God,
that can hear and help, not like to the dead idols, *Psal*
15, 3. --- 8. and 135. 15. --- 18. David took him
thus up, and did thirst in his prayers for him, *Psal.*
42. 2. and 84. 2. Thus did *Jeremiah* take him up,
when he was praying to him, *Jer.* 10, 6. 7. 10.
and upon this account looked upon him, as the only
object of divine worship, in opposition to all the false
gods in the world, which were the workmanship of
man's hands. 2dly. His being *infinite* and *incompre-*
hensible: Thus did *David* take him up, *Psal.* 145.
3. in that song of praise, *Great is the Lord, and*
greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.
So *Psal.* 147. 5. *Great is our Lord, and of great*
power, his understanding is infinite. This would keep
us at due distance, and from entertaining, base, low,
unsutable and unseemly thoughts or ideas of him in
our minds. 3dly. His *omnipresence*, filling all places:
as did *Solomon*, 1 *King*, 8, 27. This will encourage
us to pray every where, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. when sepa-
rate from all flesh, when shut up in dungeons, when
in the midst of the sea, and in the belly of hell, as it
is *Jonah.* 2, 2. As also to fear where-ever we are, &
to be in a sutable frame, knowing that God's eye is
upon us, and that no where we can be hid from his
presence, *Psal.* 139. 7. --- 12. And likewise it will
much encourage us to pray, to remember we are
praying to a present God. 4thly. His *omniscience*, as
one that tryeth the heart and reins, 1 *Chron.* 29. 17.
Jer. 32. 19. and to whom nothing is hid, not our
groanings, *Psal.* 38. 9. nor our sins, *Psal.* 69. 5.
This will incline us to plain and open-hearted deal-
ing with God: It is encouraging to know, that
we have to do with an all seeing God, who seeth e-
ven in secret, *Matth.* 6. 6. And what enemies
practise in secret against the church and them; and
seeth how false the aspersions are, which are laid upon
them by enemies. 5thly. His *unchangeableness*, as
being the same from everlasting: *Habakkuk* eyed this
Hab.

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Hab. 1. 12. Whose purpose fail not, but his thoughts
 take place in all generations. *David* taketh
 this view of him, *Psal.* 33. 11. *The counsel of the*
Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all
generations. This is a most strengthening thing, *Prov.*
 19, 21. *Isai.* 46. 10. *Psal.* 102. 24, 27. and an useful
 consideration to guard from sinistruous thoughts
 of God, as one that can be moved, or changed
 in his mind, purposes and determinations, by what
 we say, or do. 6thly. His *allsufficiency*, whereby he
 can supply all our need, *according to his riches in glo-*
ry, *Phil.* 4, 19. And be all things to us, that we
 want, and stand in need of. This is a great encour-
 agement to come unto God, to know, that he can
 answer all our desires, and be all to us, that our case
 calleth for. 7thly. His *omnipotency*, whereby nothing
 is too hard for him: Thus did *Jehoshaphat* eye him,
 when he was seeking his help against a potent enemy,
 2 *Chron.* 20. 6. So did *Jeremiah*, chap, 32, 16, 17.
 So did *Asa*, when a thousand thousand *Ethiopians*
 came against him, eye him, saying, *Lord it is nothing*
with Thee to help, whether with many, or with them
that have no power, 2 *Chron.* 14. 11. This giveth
 great encouragement in great difficulties and in des-
 perate cases, when humane probability faileth. 8thly.
 His *soveraignity*, whereby he doth what he will, fol-
 loweth what methods he please, and transcendeth
 our thoughts and hopes: This *Moses* eyed, when
 God had told him, that he would smite the people &
 disinherit them, *Numb.* 14. 11. 12. he eyed the
 power, and the majestick soveraignity of God, *verse*
 17. 18. Saying, *Let the power of my Lord be great,*
according as thou hast spoken. &c. 9thly. His *riches*
in grace and mercy. This did the *Psalmist* eye, *Psal.*
 103. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17. and 116. 4. 5. &
 145, 8. This gave *Nehemiah* encouragement, *Neh.*
 9. 17. 31. It is a noble encouragement, when sense
 of sin, and provocation presseth hard, *Mtca.* 7.
 18, 19. 10thly, His *truth and faithfulness*, as a God

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 that keepeth covenant for ever. *Nehemiah* eyed this,
Chap. 1. 5. and 9. 32. and *Daniel*, *Chap.* 9. 4. and
David, *Psal.* 36. 5. and 92. 2. and 119. 90. and
 143. 1. This encourageth to hope and patience,
 and giveth confidence of a return. 11thly. His hol-
 nels, Purity, and *righteousness*. *Habakkuk* took a
 view of this, when praying against enemies, *Hab* 1.
 12, 13, 17. 12thly. His wisdom, *Isaiah* saw this,
Isai. 31, 2. and *David* *Psal.* 104. 24. and 136. 5.
 and *Jeremiah*, *Chap.* 10. 12. and 51. 15. and *Da-*
niel. *Chap.* 2. 20. A sight of this is good in intri-
 cate cases, and difficulties; and when we observe the
 subtilty and craftiness of adversaries: and our own
 witlessnes and folly.

C H A P. XIV.

*The right Way of Prayer farther cleared, from GOD's
 being a Father.*

WE have, in the foregoing *Chapter*, pointed forth
 something of the right manner of prayer,
 to far as the consideration of the object thereof, or
 person prayed to, God, gave ground: Now for the
 further clearing up of the right manner of prayer, let
 us consider the object of our invocation, God as
 standing under the relation of a Father; for as such
 he is here mentioned: And thence see what way
 we ought to pray to God, now considered as a Fa-
 ther.

We hinted above, how God was to be looked up-
 on, and accounted a Father unto all the world, in a
 more general sense, in regard of his creating, preser-
 ving and providing for all, as the Father of the
 great family of heaven and earth; and how upon
 that account, even, wicked, graceless persons were ob-
 liged to pray unto him, and call upon him, as Fa-
 ther

ther: But we shall here speak of God, as a Father in a more spiritual restricted sense, as being a Father, to his own adopted ones, which doth presuppose and include all the more general grounds: And thence consider what way we should pray unto Him.

1. We should now approach unto God in prayer with a filial, sweet and heartsome boldness and confidence: Not as malefactors come before a judge, trembling all for fear; but as children to their Father or as one intimate & dear friend to another; and not as prisoners or captives unto their enemies. God in the gospel is holding himself forth, as reconciling sinners to himself by Jesus Christ, *2 Cor.* 5. 18, 19. And in this work of redemption, God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Christ owneth him, and calleth upon him, as his Father; for he sent him, and authorized him for that work, on which account; he is oft stiled the Father's servant. Now this consideration should animate poor sinners to draw nigh unto God as a Father, having put on fatherly affections and bowels of mercies, and as standing ready to embrace poor sinners, with his arms stretched forth, and his bosom open: As we see the Father of the prodigal son did, who, while his son was yet a great way off; saw him, and had compassion; and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him, *Luke.* 15. 20. Now this boldness and confidence is not such, as should hinder and mar their humility, and humble acknowledgment of their sins; and their blushing, & being ashamed before God, because of their former sins: For we see the prodigal, tho' he was encouraged to return home, upon the account, that he was returning to his father, and so came with confidence; yet he came with humility, confessing he had sinned against heaven, and in his fathers sight, and was no more worthy to be called his Son, *Verse*, 21. But this confidence is, 1st. In opposition to that sinful predominate and prevailing discouragement, that causeth a despondency, and an hopeless fainting, and

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despairing

despairing of coming speed, by their praying; whereby persons are either kept from praying at all, or from any measure of hope, or expectation of being the better; because of their sins, against which they conceive God is so angry and offended, that it is in vain for them, to approach to him with a supplication; and that instead of a good answer, they shall hasten his wrath upon themselves. As also, *2dly*. In opposition to slavish fear, that *keepeth* the soul a-back from God, as an enemy, that beareth them at no good will, but hateth them, and is waiting an occasion to be avenged on them: And, *3dly*. In opposition to groundless suspicious, & jealousies of God, as if he would not be so good, gentle and gracious, as he hath declared himself to be; nor would not be so ready to welcome and embrace poor sinners, as his word sheweth him to be.

2. We should approach to God in Prayer, with faith in his gracious nature, whereby he is inclined and ready to receive coming and Praying sinners; & with faith in his gracious promises; and in his gracious passages of providence, giving ground of hope & encouragement: Filial confidence is accompanied with this faith: The prodigal when he returned, called his father, *Father*, and so laid hold on him as his father; and thereby believed his fatherly disposition, and grounded his hope, upon that, and on the promises and engagements that lay in the bosom of that, confirmed by his former and continued fatherly actings. Thus tho' sin and unworthiness stare them in the face, and the sense of the former abuse of God's gracious condescensions and favours; Yet the faith of God's being a Father, and the faith of his former gracious proofs of his fatherly affection, and the faith of his promises, encourage them to come forward. *David* expresseth all this clearly, *Psal*, 103. saying, *verse 8. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plentiful in mercy*: Here is his gracious nature taken up, Then *verse*, 10. he saith, *He hath*
not

not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. There his former fatherly actions: And then *verse 13.* he saith, *Like as a father pitieth his children; so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him:* There is faith in his fatherly disposition. When the Lord is calling on backsliding Israel to return, by *Jeremiah*, chap, 3. He puts this in their mouth, *verse, 4.* *Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, my father, thou art the guide of my youth.* He will have them laying hold on him, as their Father, and call to mind his former fatherly dealing with them. See likewise how *Isaiah* thus carried, in name of the church, *chap. 64, 8.*

3. This faith, that we should approach unto God not only with hope of acceptance, and of an heartsome welcome; but with hope of getting what we ask, or as good. *Hear what Christ saith, Luke, 11, 12, 13.* ‘If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father; will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: How much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit, to them that ask him?’ The faith of his fatherly & tender affection and disposition, will bring along with it, this faith of receiving what we ask, that is necessary and good for us.

4. Hence we learn, That we should come unto God by prayer in an humble self-abasing manner: For tho’ we be children, and he our Father; yet being unworthy and sinful children, we can plead for nothing upon our own worth or merits; but must expect all freely, as flowing from his free grace and fatherly condescension. The child will not come to the father, as a merchant coming to buy, with money in his hand: but will only plead his interest in, and relation to his father, and expect what he asketh from free fatherly pity and compassion. We see the
pro-

prodigal had low thoughts of himself; he thought not himself worthy to be called a son; and was content to be as one of his father's hired servants, *Luk* 15, 19, 21.

5. As also this teacheth us to draw nigh to God with holy fear and reverence; as children should approach unto their father, knowing their own state & condition by nature, as being children born, and brought out of the loins of their father; And as keeping all due distance, remembring that honour, reverence and respect they owe unto their father: So ought the children of God approach unto him, with all due reverence and fear. *A Son* (saith the Lord, *Mal.* 1, 6.) *honoureth his father -- If then I be a Father, where is mine honour?* Now this reverence consisteth, *1st*, In having all high and respectful thoughts of God. *2^{dly}*, In having humble and low thoughts of themselves. *3^{dly}*, In carrying in all their deportment very submissively and circumspectly, lest by any thing they say, or do, they provoke the eyes of his jealousy. Now this filial fear and reverence is well consistent with the Son-like boldness and confidence, that they are allowed to have.

6. This teacheth us to approach with an holy importunity, when pressed to speak what is necessary and useful for us: The child will be importunate with the parent for meat, when he is hungry; and for drink, when he is thirsty, and for clothes, when he is naked; and will not be put off with nay-says, and other discouragements, upon the consideration of the standing relation, and of the strong and futable affection, which he hath to his children. So the child of God will importune the Lord for what he wanteth, & findeth necessary for him, upon the account of this relation, notwithstanding of the many discouragements they have from their own sinful frame. Thus did the church carry, *Ijai.* 63. 16. *Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou O Lord art our*

our Father. As if she had said, tho' we be so far degenerated, that our covenanted progenitors, *Abraham* and *Israel* should disown us, and no more look upon us, as their covenanted posterity; yet thou art our Father: And thereupon they plead with him, in the following words.

7. So it teacheth us to approach with affections, warmed towards God; with love and delight in him, and with a desire to please him: All due reverence is accompanied with love, and so is distinguished from base fear: And children approaching to their father, should not come as to their enemy, whom they hate; but as to their father, whom they love. *I will love the Lord,* (said *David*, *Psal.* 18, 1.) And then followeth, *verse*, 3. *I will call upon the Lord.* So should the children of God come and pray unto him, with a child-like affection, free of jealousy, or prejudices in their mind; because they should come unto him, as to their Father with whom they are fast-glewed in their affection, and of whom they fear not to receive any thing to their prejudice, having not the least suspicion of evil from him: and with a purpose to cleave to him, let his dispensations be never so lowre or sharp: They must love a frowning father, because he is a father still: Yea, tho' he should shut them out of doors, yet will they cry to him, as their Father whom they love.

8. This teacheth us, to come with filial submission, not limiting or prescribing to the holy one of *Israel*: A child must not think to be wiser than his father and to prescribe all to him, that he must give: He must be at his father's disposal, and be well contented to take what he giveth, tho' it be not the particular he would fainest have had. So the children of God should come in prayer, with that resolution, to submit to him in all particulars, whether as concerning the time of the Lord's answering; or as concerning the manner, how the answer shall come; or as concerning the measure of the mercy, they are asking;
yea,

yea or concerning the particular it self. They must in all these leave the Lord a latitude; and not to be petted if their humours and desires be not fully satisfied; because he is a father, who knoweth better than they, what is good for them, and will do for them that, which is good: And this should satisfy, and with this should they acquiesce.

C H A P X V .

In whose Name Prayer is to be made.

NOW followeth the *Third* particular in the Text to be spoken, *to wit*, the person in & through whom we are to ask, or pray; and this is Christ; for it is Christ, that here saith, *If ye ask anything in my Name.* As Christ is God, he is the object of worship, or the person to be prayed unto, as we cleared above: But here, when he is mentioned as the way to the Father, or when we are to pray in his Name, or to make use of him thus in our approachings to God, he is to be considered, as mediator, as God-man, clothed with the mediatory-offices: For understanding of which, we would know,

1. That man, by his sin, and rebellion against God hath put himself out of the favour of God, and out of his warm embraces: Sin hath separated betwixt God and man, *Isai. 59.* 2. And hath made up a great gulf; that there is no free access as formerly. God being a consuming fire, and man being through sin become dry stubble, fuel for the fire of God's indignation. Nay, not only hath man put himself into this deplorable state of distance, that he may not nor cannot approach unto God: But also through sin, he is become a rebel unto, and a hater of God, *Rom, 1. 30. Job. 15. 23. 24. 25.* Man now by nature

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nature is an enemy unto God, standing in need of a reconciliation, *Eph*, 2. 15. 16. *Col*. 1. 21

2. That the Lord of his grace and free love, hath condescended to take away this enmity and distance, that they, who were strangers and foreigners, and enemies by their wicked works, may come near and enjoy his fellowship, and become his citizens, and members of his household: This device never came of us, nor neither could men or angels have devised it, or found it out; but the Lord himself, to magnifie the riches of his love & grace to all eternity, hath: And to shew forth the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness towards man, as the apostle speaketh, *Eph* 2, 7. hath found out this way, without which man had been for ever in the same state, with devils, and apostate angels.

3. That this way is through his Son, the Son of his love, his only begotten son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, and by whom he made the worlds, *Heb*, 1, 2. *He is the way, and no man cometh to the Father:* but by him, *John*, 14, 6. *Through him we have access by one spirit unto the Father*, *Eph*, 2. 18. *In him we have boldness and access with confidence, by the faith of him*, *Eph*. 3. 12. He is the mid-man: He is the *One mediator betwixt God and man*, even *the man Christ Jesus*, 1 *Tim*, 2, 5. We must come unto God by him, *Heb*, 7, 25.

4. That this mediator is God-man, God and man in one person: So that who see and enjoy him, see and enjoy the father, *Joh*. 10. 38. and 14. 9. 10. He is in the Father, and the father in him. *Joh*. 17. 21. He is the trusting place where poor sinners may meet with God: God is to be found & spoken with in him. God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, 2 *Cor*, 5. 18. 19. He is the true mercy-seat typified by the mercy-seat above the ark, and betwixt the cherubims where God was to be spoken unto, and where he was pleased to make his mind known: He is the true temple typified by the temple

ple

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ple of old, unto which his people were to look by
faith.

5. The mediator to the end that the enmity might
be taken away, and access granted unto rebel man,
hath satisfied justice, by his sufferings and death, and
thus hath taken away the enmity; so that now in
Christ Jesus, we who sometimes were farr off, are
made nigh by the blood of Christ: For he is our
peace, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, He
hath reconciled both Jews and Gentiles unto God by
the cross, having slain the enmity thereby, Ephel, 2.
13. 14. 15. 16. He hath made peace, through the
blood of his cross, and by him hath reconciled us to him-
self: Even us, who were alienated and enemies in our
minds by wicked works, hath he reconciled, in the body
of his flesh, through death, Col, 1. 20. 21. 21.
We have now boldness to enter into the holiest by the
blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath
consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his
flesh, Heb. 10. 19. 20.

6. This mediator hath taken on suitable offices; to
work on this access, and to perfect the same, and
with all to encourage us to make use of him, for this
end. He is an high priest over the house of God,
that we may draw near with a true heart, in a full
assurance of faith, Heb. 10. 21. 22. He is a
great high priest, that is passed unto the heavens,
even Jesus the Son of God, that we may come
boldly unto the throne of grace, Heb, 4, 14. 16.
He is an high priest for us, and made higher than
the heavens, made such by the word of the oath, &
so is consecrated for ever more; and liveth for e-
ver to make intercession for us, having an un-
changeable priesthood: And therefore is able to save
them to the uttermost, that come unto God by
him, Heb. 7. 24. 25. 26. 28. Yea. we have such
an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the
throne of the majesty, in the heavens, a minister
of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which
the

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‘ the Lord pitched, and not man, *Heb. 8. 1. 2*
‘ *This Jesus Christ, the righteous, is our advocate with*
‘ the Father : *And is the propitiation for our sins,*
‘ *1 John, 2, 1. 2.* And being an advocate, *he plead-*
‘ *ed the sinners cause, in a legal and judicial way. So is*
‘ *he called an intercessor, and said to make intercession*
‘ *for us, Rom, 34.* And that at the right
‘ hand of God ; *because he interposes to deprecate*
‘ *God’s wrath, and to interceed, for his favour*
‘ *to us : So is he said To appear before God for us,*
‘ *Heb, 9. 24.* For Christ is not entered into the
‘ holy places, made with hands, which are the figure
‘ of the true ; but into heaven it self, now to appear
‘ in the presence of God for us. ’ And thereby is
become our constant agent and solicitor at heaven’s
court, to do our business, to plead our cause, to keep
the door of access open, and to encourage us to come
forward. Hence he is said to have *a golden censer*
with much incense, that he should offer it with the pray-
ers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before
the throne : The smoak of which incense, which
came with the prayers of the saints, is said, *to a-*
scend up before God out of his hand, Rev, 8. .3, 4.

7. This mediator, being true man, was found in
fashion as a man, tho’ being in the form of God, He
‘ thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet
‘ he made himself of no reputation, but took upon
‘ him the form of a servant, and was made in the
‘ likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a
‘ man, he humbled himself, and became obedient
‘ unto death, *Phil, 2. 6, 7. 8.* And why did he
thus become a partaker of of flesh and blood ? And
why did he take on him, not the nature of angels,
but the seed of *Abraham* ? And why was he thus
made like unto his brethren in all things ? Even (as
the apostle saith. *Heb, 2. 17, 18*) *That he might be*
a merciful and faithful high priest, in things pertain-
ing to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the peo-
ple : For in that he himself hath suffered being temp-
ted

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ted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. And
therefore (*Heb. 3. 1.*) The holy brethren, par-
takers of the heavenly calling, should consider the a-
postle and high priest of their profession, Christ Je-
sus. *We have not an high priest* (saith the same a-
postle, *Heb, 4. 15, 16.* ‘ which cannot be touched
‘ with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all
‘ points tempted like as we are, without sin. Let us
‘ therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace,
‘ that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help
‘ in time of need.’

8. Hence this high priest of our profession, and
mediator, being man still, hath a real, humane, per-
fect and sinless sympathy with his people, in their ne-
cessities and distresses: He is one that can be, and is,
natively and kindly, and in a humane manner, yet in
an holy and heavenly way, suitable to him, who is
God and man in one person, touched with the feel-
ing of our infirmities; and so hath an humane heart,
that can be stirred, moved and affected, in an holy
and sinless manner, as well as our own, with our
infirmities; and as well as the bowels of a mother,
with the pain and misery of her beloved child: but in
a more excellent and transcendent manner, because
his bowels are the bowels of humane nature now ex-
alted in glory, and of an humane nature, which is
personally united to the God-head. Jesus Christ
now in glory, is real and true man, and hath all the
real and true properties of humane nature; and there-
by is capable to be affected with our griefs, miseries,
and afflictions; And beside, while on earth he had
the experience of such evils, being tempted in all
things without sin, and being a man of sorrows, and
acquainted with grief; and that to this end (among
others) that he might more sympathizingly succour
such, as are in like case.

9. For all this work, this Lord Jesus is employed
and sent of the Father, he cometh with his authori-
ty and commission: And is therefore called the fa-
ther's

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 her's servant, *Isai*, 42, 1. and 49, 36. and 52, 13.
 and 53. 11. In which respect he is inferiour to his
 Father, *John*. 10. 29. and 14. 28. He was ap-
 pointed, or made for this, *Heb*, 3, 4. *Christ glori-*
ed not himself to be made an high priest: But he was
called of God, and made high priest by him, who said un-
to him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee,
Heb, 5. 4, 5. He was given of the father, *John*, 3.
 . He was hereunto fore-ordained before the founda-
 tion of the world, *1 Pet*. 2. 20. The Father hath
 loved him. *John*, 6. 37. And sent him upon this
 errand. *John*. 3. 17. 34. *Act*. 3. 26. *Gal*. 4. 4.
John, 5. 21. *1 John*. 4 9. Christ looks upon him-
 self, as sent of God, *John*. 6, 29. and 7. 28. and 8.
 6, and 7. 29, 8. 29. 42. And as he had authori-
 ty and commission, so had he furniture and abilities
 granted of God, for carrying on and finishing this
 work; for he received the spirit above measure, *Psal*
 5. 7. *Joh*. 3. 34. And had in him all the treasures
 of wisdom and knowledge, *Col*, 2. 3. Yea, *It pleased*
the Father, That in him should all fulness dwell, Col. 1.
 9. He was full of all grace and truth, *John*. 1. 14.
The spirit of the Lord God was upon him, because the
Lord had anointed him to preach good tidings unto the
meek, &c. Isai. 61. 1. 2. 3. *Luke*, 4, 18. He hath
 all power in heaven and earth, *Mat h*. 28. 18.
 And a Name above every name, that at his name every
 knee should bow. *Phil*, 2. 9. 10. And is exalted far
 above all principality and power, and might and domi-
 nion, and every name that is named. And God hath
 put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head
 over all things to the church. *Eph*. 1. 21. 22. *1 Pet*.
 . 22.

10. In this mediator, who is God and man, in
 one person, the God-head, which is infinite in itself
 and inconceivable by us, condescendeth to be some-
 way accessible to us, when we are to approach unto
 him in Christ, in whom this God-head dwelleth bo-
 dily, here, to speak so, we come unto God, by com-

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ming unto one, who is one, and our brother; for
this man is God also: And being man, cannot bu
be a strong engagement to us to come unto God by
him, with boldness confidence and love.

This is he, the Lord Jesus Christ, the second per
son of the blessed trinity, and now God and man i
two distinct natures, and one person for ever, wh
is the person, through whom we must approach un
to God, and in whose name we must ask, what w
ask, *By him must we offer the sacrifice of praise to Go
continually*, Heb, 13. 15. By him must we giv
thanks or by his name, *Eph^s 5. 20.* Yea, *whateve
we do in word or in deed, we should do all in the nam
of the Lord Jesus*, Col, 3. 17. He is *the beloved, i
whom we are accepted*, *Ephes. 1. 6.* Daniel aske
what he prayed for, *For the Lord's sake*, Dan, 9
17. And David for his servants sake, 1 Chron. 11
19. So of old when praying in faith, they had the
eye toward the temple (which was a type of Christ
who, was the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitche
and not man, and that greater and more perfect tabe
nacle not made with hands) *Heb, 8. 2. 1 Kings, 8
29 30. 35. 38.* Jonah 2, 4. It is he, who is *the way t
the Father*, *John. 14. 6.* and *the door*. Job, 10. 7

O what a wonder of love and condescension is thi
in God! That he 1st. Should ever suffer sinners, wh
were under the sentence of condemnation, and
whose destruction he might have got the glory of hi
justice for ever and ever, to return unto him, to
speak and present their suits unto him. 2^{dly}. Tha
he himself should find out and appoint a way, hov
they may approach unto him, and present their sup
plications. 3^{dly}. That the way is in and through
such a person, the eternal Son of God. 4^{thly}. Tha
for this end, This eternal Son of God must conde
scend so low, as to become a man, and take on th
form of a servant, and experience the griefs and dol
ours of men. 5^{thly}. That we should thereby hav
such encouragement and heart strengthening conf
deratic

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derations to make use of this mediator, in presenting
our supplications to the Lord. 6thly. That God
would have us to make use of this way only, in
coming to himself; and thus come to him with Christ
in our arms, or rather in the arms of Christ; what
ever suits or desires we have to present unto the
Lord!

Likewise how should this commend and endear
prayer unto us, that we have such a new and living
way, such a glorious and exalted intercessor through
whom to present all our desires? And how should
this encourage us to come, when all things would
discourage us, and faint us? yea, how should this
give us confidence of coming speed with God, that
it is God himself, now become man, and God and
man in one person for ever, and that for this end,
through whom we have access to God? Through
the Son, who is God over all, blessed for ever, do
we approach unto the father, and have access unto
him, for all we need. What mysteries of wisdom,
love, grace, loving-kindness and mercy are here!

C H A P. XVI.

What it is to Pray in Christ's Name.

THe next thing to be cleared here, is, What it is
to ask in the Name of Christ? This is to be cleared,
in order to our understanding the way of making
use of the Mediator, Jesus Christ, God man, in our
address unto God.

For answer therefore to this question, *What it is
to ask in the Name of Christ?* We would take notice
of these particulars, as prerequisite.

1. That the praying person must be convinced &
perswaded of his sinfulness, vileness and distance from
God, by reason of sin, wickedness and rebellion: so
as to see, and to be sensible of this, that of himself

195. *What it is to ask in Christ's Name.* Chap. XVI: he cannot think to approach with acceptance unto God, having nothing to commend him unto God, and God being a consuming fire unto all, who are lying in their sins, and are not yet reconciled unto him, through the Mediator: And therefore he must look upon himself, as necessarily standing in need of a mid-person, to reconcile him unto God, and to make his addressees acceptable: For without this, both he himself and all his performances must be an abomination unto the Lord, *Prov.* 15, 8: 29. and 21. 27. and 28, 9. And he must remain in a state of alienation and enmity, without Christ, a stranger from the covenants of promise, and having no hope, and without God in the world, *Ephes.* 2, 12. This conviction must be fixed in the heart of the praying person, that would ask in the name of Christ, to the end he may fixedly renounce all within himself, as no ground, or any part of the ground of his access unto God; as no ground of the least of his hope of acceptance.

2. The person, that would ask in Christ's Name, must have the faith and knowledge of Christ as Mediator; and know, that he alone, and none else in heaven or in earth is appointed unto this office: or is qualified, fitted and furnished thereunto, according to what was said above, in the preceeding Chapter.

3. The person that would distinctly ask in the name of Christ, would know what Christ hath done, in order to the making of peace, and to the opening a door of access for him unto the father: as also what ground of boldness and confidence, in our access unto God, and to the throne of grace, there is in his peculiar office of being a priest, offering a sacrifice of reconciliation, to atone God, and to reconcile us unto him, and daily interceeding upon the satisfaction offered and accepted, and presenting himself in heaven for us, there also to plead and advocate our cause: As also what ground of confidence and hope there is in his being man, and so particularly and experimentally acquainted with our straits, temptations, hardships

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hardships, difficulties, and infirmities. They must
know his Name, that would ask in his Name.

4. It is necessary, That the person, that would
ask in the Name of Christ, be reconciled unto God
through him, and that he hath made use of him, as
mediator, in order to his obtaining of peace and re-
conciliation, having fled to him, as the only city of
refuge, and peace-maker, and laid hold on him by
faith: For our persons must first be accepted, ere
our service shall be accepted: And they can never
make right use of Christ in a particular, who have
not made use of him for the main: Nor shall he ever
lean to Christ, in reference to a particular suit, who
hath not laid the weight of his whole soul upon Him:

5. It is also requisite, That the praying person,
pray for nothing, that is not agreeable to the mind
of Christ, and for which he hath not his warrant and
allowance; for sure, Christ will not allow us to
take his Name in vain; but we should unquestionably
take his name in vain, if we should ask any thing in
his name, which he would not approve us in, or is
contrary to his law and command.

6. It is also necessary, That such, as ask in the
Name of Christ, believe, That that is the way of
their finding access in their prayers to make use of his
name thereunto; & that through him & through his
Name they shall be accepted in their addresses & their
prayers shall find place before God: For we should take
this way, in faith; that is, as believing, that it is the way
of God, & that it is the way to come speed; & that if we
follow this way aright, we shall come speed: If our
hearts hesitate and doubt hereanent, we cannot ask
aright, in the Name of Christ; because we cannot
ask with confidence, that our asking in his Name
shall not be in vain: nor believing firmly, that
Christ spoke truth here, when he said, *Whatsoever
ye shall ask the Father in my Name, I will do it:*
There cannot be a following of this way, with con-
fidence on his gracious word of promise, which was

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spoken for our encouragement, and to give us confidence that our prayers, put up in his Name, shall certainly receive a gracious return, both here in the *Text*, and *Joh. 16. 24.*

These things premised, are prerequisite, and as here presupposed, we shall now show, wherein this asking in the Name of Christ doth consist. And

I. In drawing all our encouragement to prayer from Christ alone, or from what he hath done, in making access for us: Through him is the throne of God become to us a throne of grace and mercy: And he being such an high priest as he is, for us, we should, upon this ground be *encouraged to come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, & find grace for help in time of need,* Heb, 4. 14. 15. 16. He hath made the door patent, and hath reconciled us unto the Father by his blood, and purchased mercy, pardon and grace to us by his death and sufferings: He standeth before the throne, as our intercessor and advocate, there to procure favour for us, and to plead our cause, and to make our prayers acceptable through his incense. These things should be the sole ground of encouragement to us in our approaching with our suits unto God. These should hearten us over the belly of many difficulties. For, what tho' we see many things, yea, all things, wrong in us, and such as may discourage or dishearten us from drawing near unto God: Yet this glorious Name of Christ, wherein these mediatory works of his are to be read & seen; and his mediatory office is a part of this encouragement, to allure and force us forward over the belly of all discouragements. When, then the consideration of Christ's being our mediator and high priest, who hath entered the heavens for us, there to appear before God on our behalf, and for our good, to advocate our cause, and to interceed for us, doth encourage and embolden us to draw nigh to God, over the belly of all discouragements from all hands, and nothing else in our selves,
then

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then do we ask in the Name of Christ. When we
oppose this consideration of Christ's office and work,
of Christ's becoming man, and taking on our nature,
and coming in the likeness of sinful flesh, and be-
coming an high priest, that can be touched with the
feeling of our infirmities, unto the thoughts of our
sinfulness and unworthiness, and unto whatsoever
else Satan or our own hearts would propose to hold
us back; and thereupon take heart, and adventure
to come unto God through him, who is a propitia-
tion with the Father for our sins.

2. In drawing all the grounds of our confidence
and boldness, in prayer, from Christ alone. There
is a boldness and confidence opposite to fears, faint-
ing and doubting, which the Lord alloweth unto his
people, in their approaching unto him: And the
ground of this should be Christ, his Name, his offi-
ces and work. Because of what Christ hath done to
usher our way to the Father, we should approach in
a rejoicing exulting frame, free of carnal or slavish
fears, estrangement of heart, diffidence or drooping
heartlessness; as children approach unto their Father
or mother with a filial confidence and boldness; and
otherwise than they would do unto a stranger. The
apostle would have us coming boldly unto the throne
of grace; that is, with a purpose to tell all our mind
freely, not fearing any (as the word importeth, *Act*
4. 13.) with openness of heart, without straitning,
or hiding, or covering any thing (as the word im-
porteth, *2 Cor 3 2.*) & openly plainly and publicly as
the word importeth *Joh, 7. 4. 26. & 11. 42. Mark 8 31.*)
This boldness and confidence, with which the A-
postle would have us approaching, *Heb. 4, 16.* is
the boldness and confidence of a child, that cometh
to the Father, and telleth all that is in its heart, con-
cealing nothing, and without fear or shame, who
ever be present. And this must be founded upon
Christ alone, and on what he hath done to procure
this to us. The apostle foundeth this upon Christ's
being, *a great high priest, that is passed into the hea-*

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vens ; and upon his being a *high priest*, that can be
touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in
all points tempted, like as we are, without sin. Heb. 4.
14. 15. So Heb. 10. 19. 20. 21. 22. Having
therefore brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the
blood of Jesus. By a new and living way, which he hath
consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his
flesh. And having an high Priest over the house of God
let us draw nigh with a true heart, in full assurance of
faith: &c. So that we approach in the Name of
Christ, when, because of his consecrating for us a
new and living way, and making (as it were) a bridge
of his body, over which we might go to God;
and because of his being an high priest over the house
of God, we come with a child-like confidence, being
assured, we have God's allowance, and full liberty
to come, and have free access through him, in whom we
have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of
him. Eph, 3, 12. and 2. 18. Thus when we found
our boldness and confidence in drawing nigh to God,
only upon Christ; and when many things would hold
us aback; yet we come forward with heartiness,
gladness cheerfulness, and confidence, we ask in the
Name of Christ.

3. In drawing all the hope of our being accepted of
God, in this piece of service, only from Christ: our
persons must be accepted, or our service will not be
accepted: Now in order to the acceptance of our
persons who are sinners, we must have something to
lean to; or we cannot think to come speed by our
suits, or to be heard: And therefore when we ask
in Christ's Name, we must roll ourselves as sinners
on him, and come to God in his arms, that he may
make us acceptable; (for we must be accepted in the
beloved) and that the enmity being taken away, and
wrath out of the gate, our petitions may have free
access unto the throne of grace.

4. In going about the duty of prayer in Christ, and
in his strength; not in our own; Then do we ask
in

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in his Name, when we draw up our petitions in him
or by his Spirit, in us; and when we advance with
them in him, as going to God in the hand of Christ,
by the Spirit; and so roll all our difficulties and in-
cumbrances upon him, or whatever stands in our
way, either to hinder us from coming, or to retard
us, or discourage us in our going. Then do we
pray in his Name, when leaning to his promises of
strength, and through-bearing, we adventure over the
belly of all discouragements and of felt weakness and
unworthinels.

5. In laying all the weight of the ground of our
acceptance in that duty, only upon Christ and his
merits: For he is the one mediator; and the only
peace-maker; He only maketh ourselves and all our
service acceptable unto the Father; And therefore
when we ask in his Name, we put our petitions in
his hand, that he may present them to the Father,
and offer them up with incense out of his censer,
Rev. 8. 3. Then we expect an answer only for his
sake, and upon the account of his merits and moyen
with the Father, and not for any thing in our selves,
or upon any other account whatsoever. And when
we are thus asking in the Name of Christ, confiding
in him, and expecting a return in his Name, and u-
pon his account, our hopes will not fail us, nor will
we conclude the matter desperate, howbeit we disco-
ver much guilt and unworthinels in our selves, and
what would brangle our hopes, and cause us despond;
because this ground abideth fast, and is the same what-
ever we be: Christ's merits abide fresh with the Fa-
ther, however it be with us.

6. In being quieted in our minds, touching the e-
vent, when we have thus laid the stress of all on
Christ, and put our supplications in his hand: For
thus we remain fixed on the rock of acceptance, and
are kept from staggering through unbelief. This is
to believe on the Name of the Son of God: And this
is the confidence, that we have in him, That if we ask
any

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any thing according to His will, he heareth us. 1 John.
5. 13. 14. When we ask in his Name, we are fixed here, that Christ is our high priest, and intercessor, and thereupon we rest confident, that our prayers shall go in to the throne of grace, through him, who is our advocate with the Father, and all our hopes lean on him, and here we rest and are quiet.

Hence we may see, how, and after what manner we should ask in the Name of Christ, or address ourselves to God through him; or what we ought to do, who would make a right use of Christ, in our approachings to God; or what is requisite hereunto, *to wit.*

1. That we remember, and carry constantly upon us, an impression of what we are by nature; namely sinners, and worthless sinners, at a distance from God, having nothing to commend us to God, except misery, and poverty; nor any ground in ourselves, whereupon to expect admission to God, or his favour and acceptance; but must be beholden to another for it, or be undone for ever

2. That this is Christ's office and work, to bring sinners in unto the Father, and to make their persons accepted; yea and to present their suits, and agent their cause in heaven: Hereunto is he appointed of the Father, and he will be true to his trust; for he is faithful to him, that appointed him, and he is a faithful high priest, and will faithfully perform his work.

3. That Jesus Christ hath a great delight and complacency herein, being man, and having the true and kindly bowels of a man; and while in his state of humiliation being tempted, and experiencing in himself the pain, pressure, grief, and pungent necessity, that we suffer, though without sin: As the working bowels of the mother causeth her to run, to help her beloved child, in trouble with delight, readiness and alacrity.

4. That the Father, having appointed him to this work, to be high priest, intercessor and advocate, he
will

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will certainly be well pleased with him, in the discharge
of these offices ; and accept of all such, as come to
him thus, and make them and their supplications
welcome : That he hath moyen with the Father,
and will prevail at the court of heaven ; for all he
speaketh for, and therefore that all the suits, which he
presenteth, shall be heard, in due time.

5. That therefore we should close with him, as
the mediator, and accept of him, as sent, sealed and
offered of the Father, upon his own terms ; embrace
him in his offices, and make use of him for all the
ends thereof : And particularly, that we should
make use of him, as ushering our way to the Father ;
and upon the ground of what he hath done, to pur-
chase freedom of access to us, to approach with con-
fidence, as resting on him, and confiding in his
merits.

6. That we should eye him, as a tender hearted,
compassionate, sympathizing high priest, touched
with the feeling of our infirmities : And upon this
ground approach with warmed affections, confidence
freedom of spirit, cheerfulness and alacrity, making
all our requests known through him.

7. That we rest perswaded, that Christ will not
forget his offices and work, whatever we be ; but
will act the part of a tender-hearted, loving, and
sympathizing high priest, intercessor and advocate :
And therefore will cheerfully make us welcome, as
waiting to receive our prayers to put in his censer,
and to be employed by us in these his offices.

8. That therefore we should have confidence and
hope through him, notwithstanding of what appear-
eth from within, or from without, to discourage us,
and to faint us : Yea, and quietness and peace under
challenges : Because our prayers are to come into his
censer, and to be presented with his incense, and
therefore made acceptable : So that we need not be
up, or down in our hopes and expectations of accep-
tance, according as we find our selves in good, or in
bad

bad case, lively, or dead, better or worse prepared, at freedom, or bound up in our spirits; because the ground of our acceptance would always remain the same: for that is not in our selves, but in him, with whom the Father is well pleased.

9. That we wholly acquiesce in his merits, and rest thereupon, expecting what we desire and seek, only upon his account, who hath purchased and procured all to us, that we need, whatever we may observe in ourselves, which would brangle our hope, and weaken our expectation, yea, or make us despair of receiving a good answer.

10. That thus abstracting wholly from ourselves, and laying our whole weight upon Christ, and upon his merits, and their acquiescing, we act faith as to the particular we ask; and thus leave our selves and our suits wholly upon Christ, putting them in his hand, and confiding in him, who is a faithful high priest, and tender of all the concerns of his people; & wait in confidence and hope for a good return, in God's own time, only in and through Jesus Christ.

Thus we see, that to ask in the Name of Christ, is some far other thing, than barely to name his Name, in prayer, as to say, *Grant us, Lord, this, or that, for Christ's sake*, wherewith many may be satisfied, and think, that when they have barely made mention of his Name, they have done enough.

CHAP. XVII.

How we oft ask in Prayer, and not in the Name of CHRIST.

FROM what is said concerning the use making of Christ, in prayer, or the asking in his Name; we may clearly see, how far short we come in this duty, in several particulars; or how we ask in pray-
er

er, but not in the Name of Christ. In order to the discovery of this, for our conviction, and humiliation, we shall clear it, in some particulars. As

I. When we draw not all our encouragement to prayer from Christ alone, but from other things, beside him, we ask not in his Name: And we draw our encouragement to prayer from other things beside Christ; when,

1. We are encouraged to draw near to God in prayer, because we find our selves in some good, present disposition, and frame, as having our heart well fixed and prepared. I grant, we should labour to have our hearts in good case, fixed and prepared, when we approach unto the living God; that we may say with *David*, *Psal*, 57. 7. and 108. 1. *Our heart is fixed we will sing, and give praise*: I grant likewise, that when we find our hearts in a good frame, we may hope that the duty will be more pleasantly, and with less difficulty discharged: Yet this fixedness of heart and preparedness, should not be the ground, whence we draw our encouragement to go about this duty, as if we had no encouragement to set about this duty, beside this fixedness, or might lay hold on no encouragement, when we found our hearts out of frame: Thus indeed, we should put our preparation in the room of Christ, and so ask in our own Name, or in the Name of our good frame and preparedness of heart.

2. When we are encouraged to go about this duty, because of inward peace, freedom from challenges of guilt, or of gross out-breakings, or of guile & hypocrisie, as not regarding iniquity in our hearts: I grant when one hath this inward testimony of his own sincerity and uprightness, he may take it as a subordinate encouragement, in so far, as to look to it, and assert it, in opposition to the contrary groundless alledgeance of the devil, tempting the honest man, to conclude himself an hypocrite, or one that regardeth iniquity in his heart; And therefore must not

not dare to approach unto God, or think to find access unto, or acceptance with him. But yet this must not be made the ground of our encouragement; nor must we lean to it, as such; or think that because it is so; or so with us, therefore we may come boldly unto the throne of grace, and obtain mercy and find grace for help in time of need: For this were to put our honesty and good disposition in the room of Christ, our great high priest.

3. When we draw our encouragement unto this duty, mainly from the dispensations of the Lord, seeming to smile upon us, and to favour us; This dispensation of the Lord, it is true, may, in its own place, have the force of an argument to induce us, to set about this duty, and to wrestle over other discouragements: Yet it must not rob Christ of his due, or take his room and place: Our principle & chief ground of access unto God, must be Christ's exercising the office of high priest, in our behalf; for through him alone have we access: And when Christ keepeth his own place with us, we will thence take encouragement to draw nigh to God, through him, even tho' we miss these outward encouragements that is, even tho' we want the smillings and shinnings of God's countenance; and his dispensations look anger-like towards us, and that because of our sins and short comings. How oft have the saints taken encouragement, to go to God by prayer, from the mercy of God (which is only in and through Christ, the great high priest) when trysted with sad and sharp dispensations? So did *David*, *Psal*, 6. 1. 2, and 51, 1.

4. When we draw our main encouragement unto prayer from this, that we see and have clear apprehensions of our interest in God through Christ, and that we are now reconciled, and that the enmity is taken away. It is true, when temptations would scar us from this duty, upon the account, that we are not reconciled unto God, a soul may warrantably

reflect

reflect on this, and take notice of it, to resist this temptation: Yet it must not challenge the principal place, which is due to Christ: And this principal place, which is only Christ's due, is given to it, when we will not come to God in prayer: but when we see distinctly, and can read our interest; and when we are thinking our selves exonerated from the duty, so long as we are in the dark, as to that matter: Alas! if so, where is our high priest? And where is faith in him? and where is our approaching in him, by that new and living way, which he hath consecrated to us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh.

II. We ask not in the Name of Christ, when we approach not with boldness and confidence, upon the account of his being our mediator, high priest, advocate and intercessor: And this want of boldness and confidence appeareth.

1. When we are soon dashed and discouraged in the duty, with the sense and apprehension of our own unworthiness, sinfulness, and unsuitable carriage: It is true, the sense of these things; should humble us, and cause us approach with godly fear and trembling, knowing what we are, and with whom we have to do: But yet all this should not dash us, nor put us from the duty, nor cause us go heartlessly and discouragedly about it; because this would say, that we took all the ground of our boldness and confidence in approaching, from our selves, and therefore when we miss that ground in our selves, which we would be satisfied with, we have no confidence; Alas! If it be so with us, where is the high Priest of our profession? Where is our boldness upon the account of Christ's intercession?

2. When our approaching is accompanied with a basely and sinful fear and despondency; so as we are like a malefactor, coming before his judge to receive his sentence, rather than like a son coming unto his father: Sure, when it is thus with us, we have not that boldness in Christ, that is called for, & that

that our right use-making of the Name of Christ, & of his offices and work would help us, and prompt us unto.

3. When there is not an open-heartedness in telling God all that aileth us, but there is an hurtful and sinful bashfulness, so as we cannot lay out our case in freedom, plainness and openness of heart; Then there is not that boldness used, that we are allowed to use through Christ, our mediator and high priest: For where this is, the soul will make all its case known, and tell God both the worst and best, as a child will conceal nothing from the Father, but use all freedom of spirit.

4. When our prayers are accompanied with much fainting, hesitating, and doubting whether we shall be made welcome, when we come, or not; or whether all our labour shall not be in vain; whence proceedeth deadness, or coldness in our addresses, and an heartless despondency; We pray, as if we prayed not, because we want earnestness, zeal, and fervency; and we cannot be fervent or zealous in prayer, nor can we strive in prayer, as combatants in their set Olympick Games, did, so long as we are under the power of this fainting, or doubting. And while it is thus with us, we cannot use boldness in and through Christ, our high priest and advocate.

III. We make not use of the Name of Christ, as we ought to do, in prayer, when our hope of acceptance, in the performance of that duty, is drawn from other things, than from Christ alone. As,

1. From our freedom from an accusing, or challenging conscience, for former sins and misimprovements of former mercies: It is good and refreshing, I grant, when our hearts do not condemn us, for then we may have confidence towards God, 1 *Joh.* 3, 21. *Viz.* In Christ: But this immunity must not be laid as the ground of our acceptance, nor must we lean unto it, or rest upon it for that end; because it is not Christ: For it is Christ, and Christ only, who

who is our mediator; It is he alone, who hath made our peace, and in whom we must look for acceptance: And when we look for our acceptance from anything else, we depart from our rock, and lay Christ aside.

2. From our freedom from wandering thoughts, or such like miscarriages, in prayer: Alas! tho' it be good and commendable to be kept from these evils: yet we must not place that in Christ's room, or ask any thing from God, in prayer, upon the account hereof: For that is not the Name of Christ, and in his Name must we ask; that is, leaning to him, and to his merits alone, in order to be accepted in our persons and services. It is true also, that we may suppose, according to truth, prayer gone about without such miscarriages, is more acceptable to God, than prayer accompanied with them: Yet we must not think, that we or our performances are accepted of the Lord upon any such an account: nor must we think with words now our persons are accepted of the Lord, & we may be sure, our prayer shall have access, & we shall get a good return, because we have gotten the duty performed now in a right manner.

3. From our freedom and liberty from bonds in prayer. It is true, when the Lord doth thus loose the bonds of the soul, and enlargeth the heart to seek and receive, he usually openeth his hand to give: When he thus fixeth and prepareth the heart, he useth to bow down his ear to hear, *Psal.* 10, 17. And so this liberty and enlargement of heart, may be a good sign and token, that there is a good return at hand: Yet it must not be made the ground, and basis of our acceptance; not leaned to as the ground of our assurance, that we have access; as if a prayer could not be accepted of the Lord, wherein the heart was honest, tho' much straitned and bound-up.

4. From the warmth of frame, that we find ourselves in, while about this duty of prayer. It is, I grant, very commendable to find the heart warming towards God, and to his interests and people, while we are about this duty: Yet this kindling and warming

ing of affections, tho' it may be a good token of good success, cannot for all that be owned, as the ground of our hope of acceptance with God; nor can it be owned as the ground of the Lord's accepting of us in the duty: for that is not our peace-maker, that is not our mediator nor intercessor. Upon him alone, and upon nothing else, must our acceptance, as to our persons, and as to all our performances be founded, we intend to ask in his Name.

4. We make not use of the Name of Christ aright in prayer, when we lay the weight of the merit, of the ground upon which we expect a return and good answer, upon any other thing beside him, and his mediation: As,

1. When we expect an answer, and an hearing because of our present good frame: It is true, a bad frame and disposition may mar and hinder our being heard, and may obstruct the good answers, that other ways might possibly be had, because we are out of case either to receive them thankfully, or to improve them when received: Yet our good frame can deserve nothing at the hands of God; nor must we have any respect to it, upon that account. Christ's merits alone must procure all to us, and we must ask and receive all, only for his sake, *Dan*, 9, 17. and upon the account of his merits, and intercession, who is our redeemer and advocate, and hath purchased all to us by his death and blood, which he offered up as our great high priest.

2. When we look for our answer upon the account of some victory over some evil, some corruption or temptation or other, which we have got, after some wrestling: Tho' we will not be so bold and shameless, as to speak any such thing openly in a blunt manner; yet our hearts may deceive us, and when we are least adverting, may incline to this wrong hand, making us vain, and to conceive good hope, that now we shall come speed, because it is not now with us, as it was lately, we are not freed from that

that yoke of bondage and tyranny, under which we were lately made to groan : We know not how false and treacherous the heart is ; and therefore we should look well to it.

3. When we look for our answer, because of our good vows, purposes and resolutions, or the like : These I grant, cannot be condemned in themselves ; yea, it may be duty sometimes to take on these : But yet these and all other duties should keep their own place, and should not entrench upon Christ and upon his due : And when we, because of them, conceive more hope of being heard, and of getting a satisfactory return to our prayers, we do plainly dethrone Christ, and pray not in the Name of Christ, but in the Name of these our good purposes, vows and resolutions.

5. We make not use of the name of Christ aright, when in prayer, we make not use of Christ's strength and grace to help us to pray : That is, when,

1. We pray from a custom, which we have, or from a gift, or an habite, without any new stirring up of the grace of God, or waiting for fresh influences to carry us through the duty. And,

2. When we act not faith on the gracious promises of help assistances of the spirit, through Christ, in whom all the promises are *Yea*, and *Amen*, 2 Cor. 1 20. Nor have an eye to Christ by faith to fulfil his promise, and to send the spirit to help our infirmities.

3. When we are not, in the conviction of the weight of the duty, of our unsuitness and inability for it, and of the hazard of miscarrying in it, and of provoking God thereby, laying all by faith upon Christ, committing our selves, when out of conscience to his command, setting about the duty, wholly to his maintenance, conduct and through-bearing.

6. We make no right use of the Name of Christ in prayer, when we put not our prayers, in Christ's hand

hand, that they may be accepted through the perfume of his incense, And this appeareth, when,

1. We are tickled and fain, when we find the duty hath gone well with us, and we have been helped to discharge it to our satisfaction, and have not found a languishing in prayer, nor observed confusion and indistinctness in the same, or other evils of that kind: And on the other hand, are sadned and cast down, when we have observed such weaknesses and failings in the discharge of the duty: This our being up or down, according as we find the duty well or ill discharged to our mind, would say, that we have our eye more upon our manner of going about the duty, than upon the incense of Christ, which must perfume them, and carry them in before the Father.

2. When sense of provocations doth mar all our hopes, and causeth us conclude, That it is in vain to wait for a return; For hereby we declare, That if all were well with us, and we were free of challenges and of the sense of such provocations, we would not think, we stood in great need of Christ's blood to wash our prayers, or of his incense to make them acceptable unto the Lord: And hence it is apparent. That we put not our prayers in the hand of Christ. For if we were walking according to this principle, we would see our selves constrained hereunto the more we saw our own unworthiness, and the defects of our performances: And thus, in this respect we would have more hope, that our weak and sinful addresses, would be accepted through Jesus Christ; because we would have nothing, neither in our selves, nor in the performance of the duty, that would draw our eyes off Christ, or entice us to give a wrylook.

7 We do not make right use of the Name of Christ, in prayer, when we are not quieting our selves, as to the event of the duty, upon Christ's merits and intercession: And that when we are most called thereunto. As,

1. When

1. When the devil raiseth new storms in the soul, after prayer, and saith take this for the answer of thy prayer ; wilt thou still go on in prayer, when this is all the fruit thereof ? Then, if we would be found making right use of the Name of Christ, we should mainly repose our selves on Christ, and roll the duty on him ; and having done so, to leave it there ; and not hearken to these delusory and distracting inferences of the devil to unhinge and disquiet us.

2. When challanges of old sins and late sins, arise in the soul, and especially when challenges about failings in prayer, such as wandring of heart, want of faith and the like, come in and trouble us : for in that case, we should answer all with this, We have laid the weight of all on Christ, and we quiet our selves on his being our high priest ; and on his intercession, and there we rest, well knowing, and freely acknowledging all our own failings and shortcomings.

3. When we find the wheels of the soul drive heavily, while we are about the duty, what through want of faith, what through other discouragements : Then should our soul especially be rolling the matter on Christ : But when it is not thus with us, then it would seem, we would quiet ourselves, and rest upon some other thing, than Christ. 4^{thly}. When we get no intimation of God's favour in our addresses, nor sensible access, as we expected : Then should it appear, that we have cast the burden of all on Christ, in quieting our selves in Christ's being our high priest, and intercessor with the Father, notwithstanding hereof, and in waiting, notwithstanding of what we are disappointed of, for a return, in God's good time and way.

C H A P. XVIII.

Use of Trial, whether we ask in the Name of CHRIST or not.

FROM what hath been said, in the two foregoing Chapters, we may be helped to understand, whether in prayer we ask aright in the Name of Christ, or not: And consequently, whether we go aright about prayer, or not: Therefore we need not insist long upon it here. Only mention a few things, *1st.* Before Prayer. *2dly.* In Prayer. And *3dly.* after Prayer.

1st. Before Prayer, we may know if we make a right use of Christ's Name; if the consideration of Christ's Name, offices and work that is, His being a mediator, intercessor and advocate for us, and our high priest with the Father, be the only ground of our encouragement to draw nigh to God, and doth embolden us, to come foreward unto the throne of grace, and not the consideration of any thing done by us, or of any quality or good frame in us, or any thing else whatsoever within us, or without us. If the faith of Christ's mediation and intercession doth warm our hearts, and draw and encourage us to the duty, and embolden us to come forward, notwithstanding that

1. Old guilt stand in the way, and convictions of former transgressions; as *Psal, 25. 7. Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness sake.* Here old sins came in his view; yet he was encouraged to go on in his duty, upon the consideration of God's goodness which is now manifested in Christ; and therefore he addeth, *ver. 11. For thy Names sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.* See also *Psal, 79, 8, 9.* Satan will endeavour

your to drive us from this duty, and to discourage us from going about it, by telling us, That thus and thus we have sinned against him ; and how can we then think of approaching to him ? But if we make any right use of Christ's Name, the consideration of what Christ hath done to make way for us to the Father, will make us take courage, and come forward, whatever our sins have been.

2. Notwithstanding that present guilt stare us in the face ; as *Jer. 14. 7. O Lord, though our Iniquities testify against us, do thou, for thy Name's sake.* If satan cannot prevail to keep us from this duty, by presenting former transgressions to our view ; he will labour to do it by minding us of our present unrepented-of sins, and evil frame : But if we make a right use of the Name of Christ, all that will not scar us ; for we will see encouragement enough there, and ground of confidence, whatever we have been, or yet be, and that encouragement will prevail with us, and draw us to the duty, ever the belly of what would draw us back.

3. Notwithstanding of our present indisposition, or want of due preparation, or of a suitable frame of heart, requisite in such, as draw nigh to God : It is true, the sight and sense of this may affect and afflict us, and may sadden our hearts : But if we take such notice of this, as to think, that therefore and thereupon we are exonerated from the duty, or have no ground to approach ; it is too apparent, that all our ground of encouragement and confidence is sought within our selves, and that we would be at prayer in our own name, and not in the Name of Christ : For if we mind to pray, and to ask in the Name of Christ, we would draw our encouragement from that Name of his, how ever it were with us at present ; and this ground being always the same, we would not be up or down, as to our encouragement and boldness, according as it were well, or ill with our present dispositions.

4. Notwithstanding of the dispensations of the Lord, speaking out anger and displeasure against us; as *Psal* 79. 5. & 80, 4. 85. 5. This, it is true, proveth a very sadning and discouraging consideration; for who dare think of approaching unto an angry God? who dare draw nigh unto devouring fire? Who can stand before an angry God, contending in anger? Yet if we lean to the Name of Christ, and make a right use of it, in prayer, we will draw encouragement thence, and be heartned even to draw nigh unto an angry God; because Christ hath satisfied justice, pacified an angry God, and is now interceding for sinners: And this consideration will make us say, Whatever we be, and however the Lord hath just cause to be angry at us; yet he is well-pleased with his own Son, the Son of his bosome, he hath accepted of his mediation, he hath admitted him to be intercessor; and therefore upon this account, and upon this account only, do we come unto God; and from this ground only draw we all our encouragements; viz. That Christ is the mediator, and the only peacemaker; That he is now made an high priest for ever, and liveth for ever to make intercession for sinners: in him, and through his merits and intercession, do we approach.

Secondly, In Prayer, we may know, if we make right use of the Name of Christ, Either, *1st*, In reference to the discharging of the duty: Or *2dly*. In reference to our acceptance in it.

1. In reference to the performance of the duty, & throw-bearing in it, we may know, if we make use of the Name of Christ, by this, That then there will be an eyeing by faith of Christ, and of the promises of the Spirit, for strength and assistance; and a putting off our hearts as it were, in the hand of Christ, that he may frame them aright for the work, or frame petitions in them, and so put us in a praying posture, and carry us on acceptably in the work: And when this is, there will not be a laying aside of the duty; how-

howbeit we see, and be convinced of our utter indisposition, and unfitness for the duty, through prevailing corruptions, and the like: And howbeit we perceive our hearts growing weak, and fainting upon one occasion or other: because we will then see, that our strength, and our help is not in our selves, our stock of furniture, is in him, in whom we are compleat, and through whom we are strong, when we are weak, 2 Cor. 12, 9. 10. And who giveth power to the faint and to them, that have no might, increaseth strength, *Isa*, 40. 29. 31. 32.

Next, In reference to our acceptance in the duty, there will be a confiding and relying upon this sole ground, That Christ is the intercessor, and must present all our petitions to the Father, and make them gracious with, and acceptable to him: And this ground will give quiet, notwithstanding that,

1. The matters we are seeking be great, and our unworthiness on the other hand seem great: For the faith of Christ's merits and intercession, as the only ground of our acceptance, will quiet us here; for we seek nothing upon the account of our own worth; nor do we seek any thing, that Christ hath not purchased or procured for us, by his death and intercession.

2. Notwithstanding that many challenges arise in us, to mar our confidence, and to dash our hopes, and ding us back: For the Name of Christ, the sole ground of our hope of acceptance, remaineth firm & unchangeable; and his merits being the ground of our expectation of acceptance with God, when this ground is laid hold on, we will have hope of acceptance over all these challenges.

3. Notwithstanding that our faith begin to fail us, and we through discouragements begin to faint; for tho' this may sadden us; yet, when Christ's Name is looked to, as the ground of our acceptance in prayer, this will not cause us give over hope, and conclude,

That

That our prayers may not come up as incense before him, when presented and perturbed by Christ.

Thirdly, After prayer, we may know, if we pray aright in Christ's Name, if we rest quieted upon this ground, That Christ is the mediator and intercessor in whom, and for whose sake alone, we expect all our returns and answers, and so live in hope of a good issue, in due time, upon this account: And that.

1. Notwithstanding that satan, and our own consciences can tell us of many misdemeanours, many failings, many abuses of former returns of prayers, and the like; for we will have this answer, It was not upon the account of any good carriage in us formerly, or any good improvement of former mercies and receipts, that we present our supplications, or that we did, or do expect any return now; but purely upon the account of the Name of Christ, or of what he had done as mediator, or was yet doing as intercessor with the Father for us: And this ground may stand and yield hope, whatever we have done, or have been formerly.

2. Notwithstanding that challenges come before us of our manifold miscarriages in prayer, as of our want of faith, love, fixedness, liberty, and the like: For we may reply, that it was not upon a supposition of our having these qualifications, or of our prayers being so or so put up, that we expect our answer; but our ground of hope, is the name office, and work of Christ; and this is the same rock, and the same ground of hope, whatever we have in prayer, and however we have miscarried; nay, had we been helped never so well, in the discharge of the duty, howbeit that had been comfortable and refreshing unto us, yet we durst not, we would not have made it the ground of our hope and expectation of a good answer.

3. Notwithstanding that there be a little appearance of a good return; for this will bear up the head,
and

and give us hope, that we have put our prayers in Christ's hand, who is a merciful & faithful high priest, & who hath moyen with the Father, and hath purchased all for us that we need, and will in his good time, let us see what force his intercession with the Father hath: Here we rest, here we quiet our selves in hope.

4. Yea, notwithstanding that matters should seem worse after prayer, than before; our bonds should appear to be made stronger; Temptations should be multiplied, corruptions should be more violent, our darknets and confusion should grow, &c. If our hearts be fixed on the Name of Christ, as our only rock and ground of hope, we will wait and not despond: For we will have this to encourage our selves by, that we have laid our weight upon Christ, and put the whole matter over in the hands of our advocate and intercessor, and there we have left it, and must wait for an answer in and through him, and leave him to bring forth our answer, when, and as he thinketh good.

5. Yea, notwithstanding, that many things should concur, to brangle our hopes of receiving any good through Christ; and to cause us doubt, whether Christ will own us, or not; and whether we will take any notice of our matters: if we have cast our anchor on Christ, and rest upon his merits and intercession, in order to the receiving of an answer to our prayers, we will have ground, whereupon to stand in the midst of these tossing waves; for by this we may answer all, Christ is faithful, and a faithful and tender-hearted high priest; and so will not, nor cannot forget our case; He is a sympathizing high priest, and hath the heart of a man, and of a brother, and will not neglect our cause. Tho' we cannot answer objections; yet here we have ground to stand, and here we will stand and wait in hope; our matters and all our papers are in the hands of CHRIST our advocate, who
not

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not only office is called to do for us; but also hath
the heart of a Father, and sympathizeth with us; and
so assuredly will help in due time.

CHAP. XIX.

*Encouragements unto, and in Prayer from CHRIST's
Name.*

THAT we have Christ's Name to make use of in
Prayer, is a great ground of encouragement
to the minding of this duty of prayer, to the keeping
of us fixed at it, and in a patient waiting for an an-
swer. We have many things to dishearten and dis-
courage us from the duty; many things to make us
faint in the duty; and many things to brangle our
hope of advantage thereby: but a right uptaking of
the Name of Christ; that is, of Christ's person, offi-
ces and work, as mediator, advocate and intercessor,
would prove heart-strengthening and encouraging un-
to us, in the midst of all these discouragements, that
satan can muster-up in our way. This we shall now
manifest by instancing a few particulars.

1. Satan will endeavour to keep poor people aback
from prayer, or faint their hearts while going about
that duty, with this, That it is in vain for them to
seek the Lord. He will not hear, or regard the
prayers of sinners; we read, *Zech. 3, 1.* That when
Josuah the high priest stood before the angel of the
Lord, satan stood at his right hand, to resist him, as
an adversary. And how oft doth he so with poor
sinners? but the right consideration of the Name of
Christ, who is that Lord *Jehovah*, that said to satan,
*Ver. 2. The Lord rebuke thee, O satan, even the
Lord, that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee, &c.*
Would take away this mountain out of the way, and
make it disappear. For tho' we be sinners; yet he is
righteous

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righteous holy, harmles and undefiled: He hath satisfied justice, he hath purchased all; the Father is well pleased in him: We seek nothing upon our own account, but all upon his account, and for his sake; and therefore whatever we be: and how unworthy soever we be, yet he is worthy, he hath mercy with the Father, he is the Father's beloved son, in whom he is well-pleased: And so upon this account we may take boldness, notwithstanding of all the convictions of our own unworthiness.

2. When conscience of our base original, corrupt and naughty nature, estrangement from Christ, and from the covenants of promise; the sins of our youth and education, and the place where we live; and the like stare us in the face, and would say, It is in vain for us to call upon the Lord; he will not hear: This Name of Christ may counter-work all this discouragement. When the poor woman of *Canaan* heard that she was called a dog, and had no interest in the covenant, nor right to the mercies of the covenant; but was an alien and a stranger, and lived among dogs; yet she gave not over her suit, she was not put from duty, nor looked upon the matter, as altogether hopeles; for she was speaking to the Lord, *the son of David*, and was begging mercy from him: She was seeking nothing upon the account of *her* own work, but was asking for mercy, having her eye and her heart upon the Lord, *the son of David*, that is the mediator betwixt God and Man, the promised *Messiah*.

3. Satan may raise storms in the soul and present to the eye of the sinner, his former iniquities, with all their aggravations, and present him to his own eye, as the vilest of sinners: And to this end he may muster-up all his former abuses of mercy and kindnesses received; that he may drive the poor sinner away from this duty but right uptaking of the Name of Christ, may encourage to go over this great mountain. *Daniel* took with all these challenges of sin, &
with

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vvith all the aggravations thereof, in his prayer, *chap*
9. 5. and forevvards; and yet he urgeth his petiti-
ons, *For the Lord's sake, ver, 17,* and for *His great*
mercie's sake, ver. 18. The sense of former iniqui-
ties and provocations will not put us from the duty,
nor out of hope of profiting by the duty, if we get
a right view of the Name of Christ, and consider well
what is there.

4. Tho' conscience of guilt should stare us in the
Face, when we are approaching, and, as it were, ding
back our petitions into our throat, and cause us eat
up our own words; or conclude, that we may ut-
ter words, but shall not be the better: Yet sutable
apprehensions of this Name of Christ, will encourage
us to come forward, & give us good ground of hope,
cause us say with *Jeremiah, Chap. 14. 7. O Lord,*
though our iniquities testifie against us, do thou it for thy
Name's sake. and with *David, Psal, 25. 7. Re-*
member not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions;
according to thy mercy remember thou me; for thy
goodness sake O Lord. And *ver. 11. For thy Name's*
sake O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great
The name of Christ rightly considered and improven,
may soon remove that difficulty, and give ground to
expect free grace, and the out-flowings of free mercy
notwithstanding of our sins.

5. It is a discouraging dispensation, when the
Lord seemeth to refuse to hear, and the praying per-
son is made to say, as *Psal. 22, 2. O my God, I*
cry in the day time, but thou hearest not, &c. And
when he seemeth to be angry at their prayers, as *Psal*
80. 4. and to shut out their prayer, when they cry
and shout, as *Lam, 3, 8.* Yet a right sight of the
Name of Christ will keep in life; for through him
they will see the Lord to be their portion and that his
compassions fail not, but are new every morning, as
Lam. 3. 22. 23. 24. And thence will conclude,
That it is good, that they should both hope, and
quietly wait for his salvation, *ver, 26, For the Lord*

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is good unto them, that wait for him, to the soul,
that seeketh him, *ver* 25. A sight of *the man of God's*
right hand, and of the Son of man, whom he hath made
strong for himself, Psal. 80. 17. Will keep the soul
in life, and cause it cry for the church, and for itself,
Turn us again, O Lord God of Hosts, cause thy face
to shine, and we shall be saved. *ver*, 19.

6. It is a great discouragement, when the Lord,
by his dispensations, is seemingly not only to say,
that he will not answer; but also is in a manner,
discharging to pray any more for that mercy; as when
he said to Moses, Exod. 32. 10. *Let me alone, that*
my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may
consume them: Yet a sight of this Name, in and
through which alone God sheweth mercy unto sin-
ners, will encourage to cry with Moses, Numb, 14
19. *Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people,*
according unto the greatness of thy mercy. &c.

7. It is also a great discouragement unto a coming
unto God, when such as should set us forward, and
encourage us to come, are standing in our way, hold-
ing us off, and discouraging us from coming forward;
as when the multitude rebuked the two blind men,
who were crying after Christ, *Matth*, 30. 31. Yet
where Christ is rightly taken up, and his Name con-
sidered, this difficulty will be soon stepped over; there
will be a stronger attractive force found therein, than
to be resisted by such discouragements: The blind
men would not be silent, for all that the multitude
could say; because they fixed on Christ's Name, and
cried to *Jesus of Nazareth, the son of David.* We see
also what discouragements the spouse met with, at
the hands of the watch-men, *Cant*. 5. 7. And yet
she would not, for all that, give over her pursuit.

8. This Name of Christ, if we take a right look of
it, will encourage us to pray, whatever be our pre-
sent frame, and condition, tho' our hearts were over-
whelmed, as *Psal*. 61. 2. and the waters were come
in unto our soul, and we were sinking in deep mire,
where

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where is no standing, and were come into deep waters, where the floods overflow us ; as *Psal.* 69. 1, 2, 3. Because we will see that there, which will give us ground of footing, and hope of an outgate ; and give us ground to believe, that our prayers will have access unto the Lord, for Christ is the great intercessor, and is always heard of his Father ; He hath great moyen in heaven ; and he hath a bleeding loving and sympathizing heart with poor sinners, that cry unto God, through him : He is full of pity & compassion, and most ready to succur and help.

9. Yea, we will hence be encouraged to ly at the posts of wisdom's doors, tho' we should be tempted to think, That all our pains shall be in vain, and that heaven's doors are shut, and shall not be opened : for right thoughts of the Name of Christ, the great high priest and intercessor will afford us ground to wait, and cause us say, Christ is the way, and the door. He can open the treasures of heaven, and rain down blessings upon us ; and thereupon we can see ground to wait : many a blessing hath he procured for a poor sinner, that he had but small hopes to meet with : many a preventing mercy hath he bestowed, and many a time hath he surprized poor people with mercies, that they had little or no hope ever to see.

10. Moreover right apprehensions of this Name, in which we are to pray, will encourage us to hold on in our suits though the devil should suggest unto us, that we shall thereby rather procure a curse, than a blessing, and that God hath decreed the contrary to what we ask ; For as God's revealed will is our rule ; so, if the thing we ask be for God's glory, and for our good, we have ground to expect it, in the Name of Jesus, who is faithful in all his promises, and faithful in the execution of his offices ; and who hath purchased all the sure mercies of *David* unto us.

C H A P. XX.

What we are to ask.

WE come in the next place, to the *Fourth* particular in the text, which is the matter of our petitions, conjoined in that word, *Whatsoever*. Whence we may take notice of these things.

1. That believers have many errands to God; this word, *Whatsoever* importeth, that they have more to seek, than one particular; yea, that they have any: This needeth no confirmation, seeing it is obvious and manifest.

2. That through Christ, and in his Name, believers are welcome to God with all their errands. *Whatsoever they ask in his Name, he will do it.* Be their suits and desires what they will, if good and useful, if for God's glory, and for their own good, they may come away with them to God.

Thus the state of believers here, being a state of wants, and they having ground to expect a welcome from God, when coming with their wants, the saints must have a noble life, even a life of constant intercourse with God; their necessity thus is turned to their noble advantage; for now they are under a rich and glorious necessity of drawing nigh to God, and standing constantly at the posts of his door. And O what a rich privilege is this, that they may make all their desires known unto God, and pour forth all their soul, into his bosom? O! who would not serve such a master?

3. That Believers are allowed to come foreward with their supplications, what ever difficulties, or seeming impossibilities may appear in their way: *Whatsoever* saith, That they may come foreward with their desires tho' they should imagine it almost impossible, that

these their desires should be granted: For they are to wrestle, in prayer, as in an agony, and strive against much opposition, contradiction, difficulty, & what of that kind standeth in the way, either as made use of by satan, who will do all he can, to hold us a back; or by our own unbelieving heart, suggesting many grounds of fears and doubts, to weaken our faith and confidence: And all these apparent difficulties and discouragements, should be a bellows to blow at the fire of our desires, & cause them to flame the more.

4. That believers have a large field to go upon in prayer; *Whatsoever ye shall ask.* This is the principle thing here to be noticed; and scripture confirmeth it, Phil. 4. 6. *But in everything by prayer and supplications with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.* Mark, 11, 24. *Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive, and ye shall have.* 1 Kings, 8. 38. 39. *What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all the people of Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands towards this house: Then hear thou in heaven. &c.* 2 Chron. 6. 21.---29.---40. Job. 16. 23.

For clearing of this, we would know, that the meaning is not, that believers are allowed to pray for every thing, they please; for there are several things they must not pray for: As,

1. They must not pray for any thing whether to themselves, or to others, that is prohibited, unlawful, or not according to the revealed will of God: what we ask must be according to God's will, 1. Job 5. 14.

2. They must not pray for any thing, that is not promised, either in general, or in particular: For our prayers should be as the eccho of his promises.

3. They should pray for nothing that tendeth to promote lust, and sin in the soul; for this is to pray

for the devil's kingdom, and to ask amiss, when it is to consume it upon our lusts, *Jam. 4. 3.*

4. They should ask for nothing, that is either unreasonable, or unfutable to their condition, whether outward or inward: For this were to ask for what the Lord hath not promised, and what would do them harm, and no good.

But *next*, The meaning of this, *whatsoever*, is, That as to these things, which they are allowed of God to seek, they may ask them: Howbeit,

1. They be never to great things, in their eyes, for them to ask; They need not scruple to seek great things of God, if they be such things, as are allowed; not the half of his kingdom, will he allow them to seek, but the whole; yea, himself; and what can be more? The things they seek, if according to his revealed will, cannot be too great. This *whatsoever* taketh in the greatest matters.

2. Howbeit the thing they would have, be never so mean and teckless, in their own eyes; and they may think, they cannot trouble God (as it were) with such petty matters: For this *whatsoever* will take in the smallest thing we can desire, or would have, whether for soul, or body; were it but a bit of bread, or a cup of cold water, in our need, or the meanest thing imaginable, that our present case calleth for; He alloweth us to seek it of Him.

3. Howbeit the things they would have, seem most improbable, unlikely, yea and almost impossible. For this *whatsoever* comprehendeth even these things, that have not many promising appearances, or seem not very feasible, or probable: but very improbable: When the Lord promised to *Abraham*, that he would give him a son, in his old-age, tho' his own body & *Sarah's* womb were dead; and so it was very unlikely and improbable, that ever she should bear him a son, Yet he was to believe, and to pray for that in faith, contrary and contradictory-like dispensations to the promised mercy should not stop our mouth, nor

brangle our faith, but rather set an edge on our desires, and exercise our faith, and patience.

4. Howbeit the suits and desires be many, and many times renewed: This *whatsoever* taketh in all our lawful desires whensoever, and how oft soever, we present them: The Lord will not be wearied with our frequent coming, or with our many and multiplied supplications.

5. Howbeit the suits be for others, as well as for our selves: This *whatsoever* is not to be limited or restricted to particulars, that concern our selves, whether as to our bodies, or as to our souls: but comprehendeth our desires for others, and for the whole Church, when according to the will of God.

So that this *whatsoever*, pointeth forth the largeness of the matter of our suits and supplications; both as to the persons for whom, and as to the particulars we ask.

As to the persons, not only are we to pray for our selves; but also for our brethren, *Jam.* 5. 16. yea, for our enemies, *Matth.* 5. 44. and for all sorts of persons living, *1 Tim.* 2. 1. 2. or that shall live hereafter, according as Christ did, *John.* 17. 20. for the whole church of Christ upon earth, *Ephes.* 6. 18. *Psal.* 28. 9. and 14. 7. and 72. 15. for magistrates, *1 Tim.* 2. 2. and for ministers, *Col.* 4. 3. *Ephes.* 6. 19. Only we must not pray for the dead *2 Sam.* 12. 21, 22, 23. nor for such, as are known to have sinned the sin unto death, *1 John.* 5. 16.

As to the particulars, the Lord hath given us the sum and heads of these in that pattern of prayer, which he taught his disciples. Whence we see,

1. That we are to pray For God's grace, whereby we and others may be moved, inclined, enabled and determined to glorifie God, in all his works, ways, appointments, and in whatsoever he is pleased to reveal himself by, and make his Name known, *Psal.* 67. 1. 2. 3. and 85. 18. and 86. 11. 12. 16. 17. Thus are we to pray for every thing, that may

may help us and others to glorifie this God, in our thoughts, words and actions, *Psal.* 103. 1. and 19. 14. *Phil.* 1. 9. 11. and to pray, that God would prevent, or remove atheism, ignorance, idolatry, prophaneness, and whatsoever is dishonourable to him, out of the world, *Psal.* 67. 1. 2, 3, 4. *Ephes.* 1. 17. 18. *Psal.* 98. 7. and 74. 18. 22 23. 2 *King.* 29. 15. 16. As also we may pray, that God by his over-ruling and all disposing providence, may so order, direct and dispose of all things, as he may be thereby exalted and glorified, *Psal.* 33. throughout, and 140. 4. 8. 1 *Chron.* 20. 6 10. 11. 12.

2. That we are to pray for all things, that may tend to the advancing and enlarging of the kingdom of Christ, in the world: *to wit*, That satan's kingdom of sin may be destroyed, *Psal.* 68. 1. 18. *Rev* 12. 10. 11. That the gospel, the word of Christ's kingdom, may be preached and propagated through the world, 2 *Thes.* 3, 1. That the *Jews* may in due time be called-in, *Rom.* 10. 1. That the fulness of the *Gentiles* may be brought in, *John.* 17. 9. 20. *Romans.* 11, 25. 26. *Psal.* 67, throughout. That the church of Christ may be furnished with all gospel officers and ordinances, *Matth* 9. 18. 2 *Thes.* 3. 1. That the church may be purged from corruption. *Mal.* 3. 1. 11. *Ephes.* 3, 9. maintained & countenanced by the civil magistrate, 1 *Tim.* 2, 1. 2, 3. That the ordinances of Christ may be purely dispensed, without the admixture of men's devices; as also made effectual for the conversion of such, as are not brought in; and for the confirming, comforting and building-up of those that are already converted *Acts.* 4. 29. 30. *Ephes.* 6. 18. 19. 20. *Rom.* 15. 29. 30. 31. 2 *Thes.* 1, 11. and 2. 16. 17. That Christ would rule in our hearts here, *Eph* 3. 14. to 21. That he would hasten the time of his second coming, and of our reigning, with him for ever. *Revel.* 22, 20. And finally, That he would

be pleased to to exercise the kingdom of his power in all the world, as may best conduce to promote these forementioned ends, *Isai*, 64, 1, 2. *Revel*, 4. 8. 9. 10. 11.

3. That we are to pray for all things, that may fit and dispose us for doing of God's will, in all points, and for complying with all his dispensations; And therefore, that he would by his holy spirit cure us of our blindness. *Ephes*, 1 17. 18. of our weakness. *Eph* 3. 16. of our indisposedness, *Matth*, 26. 40. 41. and of our perverseness of heart, *Jerem*. 31, 18. 9. whereby we are unable and unwilling to know, and to do the will of God, *Rom*. 7. 18. *Job*. 21, 14. 1 *Cor*, 2, 14. and prone to rebel against his word, *Rom*. 8, 7. to repine and murmur against his providence, *Exod*. 17. 7. *Numb*. 14. 2. and are wholly inclined to do the will of the flesh, and of the devil, *Ephes*, 2, 2. As also, that he would by his grace make us able and willing, to know, to do, and submit to his will, in all things, *Psal*. 119. 1, 8, 35. 36. *Acts*. 21. 14. and with humility. *Micah*. 6. 8. with cheerfulness, *Psal*. 100. 2. *Job*. 1, 21. 2. *Sant*, 15, 25. 26. faithfulness, *Isai*. 38. 3. diligence *Psal*, 119. 4, 5. zeal, *Rom*. 12. 11. sincerity, *Psal*. 119. 80. and constancy, *Psal*, 119. 112. as the angels do in heaven. *Isai*, 6. 2, 3. *Psal*. 103. 20. 21. *Matth*. 18. 10.

4. That we are to pray for our outward well-being in a world; with all due submission: That is, that we may have a competent portion of the outward blessings of this life, and the same continued with us, and blessed to us, *Gen*, 43. 12, 13, 14. and 28. 20. *Ephes*. 4, 28. 2 *Thes*. 3, 11. 12. *Phil*. 4, 6. 1 *Tim*. 4, 3, 4, 5. And that we may have contentment with what God carveth out unto us, 1 *Tim*. 6. 6. 7. 8. and that we may be preserved from all things. that are contrary to our temporal support and comfort, *Prov*, 30. 8. 9. Thus we are to pray for food
and

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and raiment, and temporal preservations, according
as God seeth fit.

5. That we are to pray for the pardon of all our
sins, original and actual ; that is, That God, of his
free grace would, through the obedience and satisfac-
tion of Christ, apprehended and applied by faith, ac-
quit us both from the guilt and punishment of sins,
Rom. 3. 9. to 22. compared with *Rom.* 3. 24,
25. 26. *Heb.* 9. 22. *Psal.* 51. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
That he would accept of us in Christ, *Ephes.* 1, 6.
7. continue his favour and grace to us, *2 Pet.* 1, 2.
pardon our daily failings, *Hes.* 14. 2. fill us with
peace and joy in giving us daily more and more as-
surance of pardon, *Rom.* 15. 13. *Psal.* 51. 7. 8.
10. 12.

6. That we are to pray for preservation from snares
and temptations, *Matth.* 26, 21. *Psal.* 19. 13. or
if tempted, that we be powerfully supported and en-
abled to stand in the hour of temptation, *Ephes.* 3,
14, 15, 16, 17. *1 Thes.* 3, 13. *Jude*, ver 24. or
when fallen, that we may be raised and recovered out
of it. *Psal.* 51. 12. and have that dispensation sanc-
tified to us, to the end it may be rightly improven,
1 Pet. 5, 2. 9. 10. To which end we are to pray,
that our sanctification and salvation may be perfec-
ted, *2 Cor.* 13, 7. 9. Satan may be troden under
foot, *Rom.* 16. 20. *Zech.* 3. 2, *Luke.* 22, 31, 32.
and that we may be fully freed from sin, temptation
and all evil for ever, *John.* 17. 15. *1 Thes.* 5. 23.

Thus we see, believers have a large field to go u-
pon, in their prayers, and may pray for every thing

1. That tendeth to the glorifying of God, in
themselves, or others.

2. That is particularly promised ; Thus *David*
presseth the promise, that God made to him, and the
word, on which he made him to trust, and hope,
Psal. 119. 49.

3. that cometh under the lap of a general promise :
such as that, *I will be thy God* ; or *I will never leave*
thee, nor forsake thee. P 4 4. That

4. That affecteth and troubleth our minds, how feckless and inconsiderable so ever it would seem to be, in it self.

5. That concerneth our way and walk, as men, or as Christians.

6. That it is for our good, whether as to soul, or body, here, or hereafter. Only we would mind these cautions.

1. That we must not use the same peremptoriness and importunity, in all our desires ; For *1st*. We may be more earnest in soul-matters than in bodily things. *2^{dly}*. And in soul-matters, we may be more peremptor and importunate in things absolutely necessary, than in other things, wherein we are called to more submission. And *3^{dly}*. Even in things necessary, we must give God a latitude, as to the *time* when he will bestow them, the *manner* how, and the *degree* in which ; for we must not set limits unto the holy one of Israel.

2. When we are uncertain, whether the particular we desire, or have a mind to, be really good for us, or not, we should be conditional in our prayers therefore ; and only seek it in prayer, if the Lord see that it is good for us.

3. What is more particularly promised, may be more peremptorily hoped for, and prayed for ; yet with due submission, as to the time, manner and measure.

4. We must not Pray for every thing, that is in it self good and desireable ; but for that which we have some ground of hope to expect : Yet sometimes that which we have only a simple velleity and desire for, and no sure ground to expect, may be expressed prayer-ways to God, but with due submission.

5. We must not exercise the like faith, in all our prayers ; for faith in prayer is to be regulated by the promise ; and all things are not in a like manner promised ; but some things absolutely, and other things if they be good for us, and according as the Lord seeth fit.

C H A P.

Some Uses mentioned of the forgoing Truth.

THe Lord's granting us such a large field to go upon, in prayer, speaketh-out several things to us which we should mind : As,

1. Hence we are called aloud, to wonder at and admire the Lord's condescendency of love, that will have poor sinful creatures thus acknowledging him by prayer and supplication, in all their ways, *Prov. 3, 6.* and committing all their ways to him. *Psal. 37, 5.* What wonderful condescendency is this, that this great God should humble himself to take notice of what we, poor sinful worms, stand in need of, & to be concerned with all our petty particulars. How may we cry out with the Psalmist, *Psal, 113. 4, 5, 6, 7.* *The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high ? Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth.* (or as it may be read, Who looketh down very far, in the heavens, and upon the earth) *He raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghil.* How wonderful should it be unto us, that this great sovereign, who is absolute Lord of heaven and earth, should take such special and particular notice of us, in all our straits and difficulties ; and as a tender Hearted Father, will have us laying all our desires before him, consulting him in all our difficult cases, and seeking all we stand in need out of his hand ? How willingly should we here acknowledge our own folly, misery, and ignorance, and profess our absolute dependence upon the Lord for all things that concern both body and soul ; and glory in this, that we must have all out of the hand of such an high and

and glorious king, who is exalted above the heavens: And how should we esteem highly of the meanest favour of mercy, we receive by prayer, upon this account, that it cometh out of the hand of such a condescending king? And all this should be minded by us, to the end, we may more see and set forth, wonder at, and be ravished with the thoughts of this inconceivable and inexpressible love and condescendency in God, who loutteth down from his high throne of glory, to see what we want, and what it is we would have; to put his ear (as it were) to our mouth, to hearken and hear, what we are seeking what our hearts are breathing after, that he may grant it to us, and do it for us.

2. Here we may take notice of, and consider with joy and admiration, the rich and glorious priviledge and advantage of believers: In that,

1. They are cared for, and taken notice of, by the great king of heaven, in all their meanest particulars, in all their ways and concernments. Doth not the Lord hereby declare, that he keepeth them, in all their ways, *Psal.* 9. 11. and that he honoureth them, as it is *ver.* 15. That he seeth their ways, and counteth their steps, *Job.* 31, 4. and that all their ways are before him, *Psal.* 119, 168. And that he is acquainted with them all, *Psal.* 139, 3.

2. They are allowed to come to him with all their particular concernments, and to acquaint him with all their wants and necessities, whether of soul or body: what a priviledge would men account it, to have free access unto a great king or prince upon earth, with all their desires, with the smallest as well as with the greatest? And should not this be a priviledge of an higher nature; that we poor sinful worms, have allowance of the great God, of heaven and earth, to make all our requests known to him, to lay all our wants before him, and to acquaint him with our meanest concerns? How may believers glory in this goodness of God, that hath so highly advanced them
and

and given them free access to him, in whatever condition they are, and liberty to come to him, as to their bosom-friend, yea, as to their Father, that they may pour out their hearts in his bosome?

3. They may, by this means, have constant and continual intercourse with heaven, and be always standing with their supplications in their hand, before his sight. They need never want an opportunity of coming unto God, and of speaking to Him; for being necessitous and indigent creatures, they have always fair matter and occasion, and God's door standeth always open for them; so that in every hour of the day, they may come and tell God what aileth them, and what they want, and what they would have.

This high and honourable priviledge would be the more esteemed if we considered how *1st*. We had by our own treacherous & rebellious practice, brought our selves into an estate of banishment from God, & from his glorious and favourable presence. *2^{dly}*. How we had deserved, as well as others, eternal separation and banishment from God, and that for our abuse of that familiarity and friendship, which once we were admitted unto. *3^{dly}*. How we had brought our selves into this gulf of misery and indigency, by our folly and wickedness. *4^{tly}*. How, notwithstanding of all this free grace and free love, in Christ Jesus, had opened the door of mercy unto us, and doth daily keep it open for us, notwithstanding of our provocations both by slighting and contemning of this high and glorious priviledge, and by misimproving favours had thereby.

3. Hence we may see, how inexcusable such are, who do neglect this duty of prayer, and go not to God with all their necessities; yea, who present few supplications to him, for all the rich field they have to go upon, and the great allowance they have of God, to come to him with all their wants. Let such make answer to these few following questions.

1. Are you not sensible of many wants, both for soul and body? or think you, that you are perfect and stand in need of nothing?

2. Can you supply all these wants, by your own industry and care? Or are they only such wants, as you may well want the supply of, and suffer no great prejudice? And are you therefore indifferent, whether you be helped or no?

3. Can you do any thing without the concurrence, help and assistance of God? Do you not live, move and have your being in him, both as men, and as christians? What can you think to do, either for soul, or body, for your selves, or for others, without him?

4. Is there any thing, how mean soever, that God's providence and care doth not reach unto? Doth he not feed the ravens, and cloath the lilies?

5. Is there not a peculiar, heavenly and satisfying relish in the meanest favour, that cometh out of heaven, from the hand of God? Will not a cup of cold water, sent out of heaven, from the hand of an heavenly Father, have a sweeter relish to an heavenly taste, than a glass of the best wine, that cometh from the vine.

6. Is it not then better to have all our water turned into wine, I mean to have all our common mercies sent us out of heaven, from the hand of a Father; and to receive them from his hand, by prayer; than to take them as common casts of providence, whereof the irrational brutes are partakers?

7. Is it not better for a poor weak, witless child to be under the tutory and care of its parents, where it may have all it needeth for the asking? than to be left to itself, to its own care and providing in the open fields among wild beasts?

8. Is not Frequent access to God, for what we need, and would have a most honourable and desirable thing?

9. Is it not then a high contempt of this Free grace
rich

rich love, and admirable condescension of God, that when he hath granted access with all suits, we will not, for all that, present our desires unto God?

10. Do not such as neglect this duty, say that either they have no wants, or they desire not to have them supplied; or they can supply all themselves without God; or that God taketh no notice of their particulars; or that there is no particular worth, or advantage in having all out of the hand of God, &c? Must not this neglect be a great and grievous sin?

4. We may hence see, how we are called to improve this rich advantage, and to mind this duty more of making all our necessities known unto God: knowing,

1. How much this course will commend unto us, the Free love and rich grace of God: O! the believer will get hereby many renewed proofs and demonstrations of the same; which will more and more endear God unto his soul every time he goeth to God with this and the other desire, he hath a fresh occasion to think of, and admire this grace and love of God; which will also sweeten the duty itself.

2. How much this will proclaim our absolute dependence upon God, and fix in our hearts, when we see, we cannot subsist one day, or hour, or minute without him; but must have all things from him, that can contribute to our welfare, either as to soul, or body; and how we will hereby see our emptiness and nothingness, which will serve to keep us humble; And this indeed is no small advantage.

3. How hereby we shall have sweet and familiar intercourse with heaven, and communion with God; If we tell God all our wants, we need not fear, that we shall wear out of acquaintance, or that distance shall grow betwixt God and us: A child, that is always seeking from the mother some thing or other, cannot readily forget her; nor can the mother forget the child.

4. How hereby we keep up a noble and enriching trade,

trade, with heaven, from whence we receive all our incomes, all our up-making, and enriching wares, even all our spiritual and temporal mercies, upon our sending up our bills, or signifying by our commissions what we would have.

5. How hereby we are kept in a sweet spiritual Frame, our heavenly mindedness groweth, and we become more and more dead and mortified to the low and base things of this world; for hereby we taste continually of God's goodness; all we receive hath an heavenly relish, because it is received, as coming out of heaven, from an heavenly Father.

6. How hereby we are kept in the Faith of the Lord's being God over all, omniscient omnipresent almighty, and the great orderer and dispenser of all things here below; because every new mercy is a fresh confirmation thereof to us, being received by prayer.

7. How hereby we receive many excellent, heart-confirming, soul-encouraging experiments and proofs of Gods care, love, faithfulness and truth: every answer, or return of prayer having this engraven upon it, Behold the constant and renewed love, care, tenderness and faithfulness of God.

8. What ease and refreshing it is to a christian, to have the bosome of God to go unto; and God a more hearty Friend than any whatsoever to run unto, with all his cares, doubts, fears, pinching straits difficulties and necessities.

C H A P. XXII.

Of the Answer of Prayer.

THe fifth particular in the Text cometh now to be spoken unto, and that is, The fruit of advantage

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tage, which is to be had by prayer, it is no vain, or idle unprofitable exercise, there is a rich income attending this trade. What can a beggar desire more to make him up, than this, to have all granted to him that he asketh? Now, our Lord telleth his disciples here, that whatsoever they ask in his Name, he will do it, *I will do it.* Wherein we have two things pointed forth.

First, The answer it self, what they ask shall be granted, it shall be done what they desire to be done.

Secondly. There is the manner of this answer, or the way, how it shall be done, Christ saith, That he will do it, He himself will do it, he will work and grant the answer, and give them their hearts desire.

As to the *First* of these, we learn thereby, That the prayers and desires of the saints, are not words, that vanish in the wind, they fall not to the ground? there is a return coming, and an answer to be expected: All the lawful good, useful and expedient desires and requests shall be granted in due time. This is a truth, that needeth not much confirmation, seeing the whole scriptures of God, and the experience of the saints in all generations, bear testimonie hereunto: Yet in regard, that it is but little fixed in the heart, and firmly believed, whence much wearying of the duty, and fainting in it, proceedeth, and a little earnestness, courage and confidence in going about it, appeareth, it will be necessary to point at some grounds hereof, whereby we may be confirmed in the faith of this, and encouraged over the belly of many outward and inward difficulties, to go on in this profitable and delightful exercise. Of these encouraging and confirming grounds, I shall mention these following.

1. This is one of God's titles and stiles, under which he is held forth, and by which the believer apprehendeth and layeth hold on him. *Psal, 69. 2. O thou that hearest prayer.* The Psalmist took a broad look of God, under this name, *The hearer of pray-*

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ers; and by this was encouraged to go to him, and
lay forth all his desires before him. and not only so,
but he looketh upon it, as the standing ground of
encouragement, for all people in all ages and gene-
rations; for he addeth, *Unto thee shall all flesh come.*
Yea, this is laid down as a ground of the song of
praise unto the Lord in Zion, and of vowing and per-
forming their vows unto him, mentioned verse 1.
So that as it is an unquestionable truth, that God
heareth prayers; so it is a comfortable and encoura-
ging truth, and the ground of a song of praise.

2. By this the Lord proveth himself to be the true
and living God, and not like *Baal*, as we see, 1
King, 13, 24. And I will call on the Name of the
Lord, and the God that answereth by fire, let him be
God,: And all the people answered and said, *The*
word is good. Thus the Lord, by hearing the pray-
er of the prophets, when *Baal* could not hear or an-
swer his idol-prophets, did demonstrate, in the sight
of the king, and all of them and there present, that
he alone was *Jehovah*. The prophet prayed, *verse.*
36, 37. and said, *Lord God of Abraham Isaac and*
Israel, let it be known this day, that thou art God in
Israel,----hear me O Lord, hear me, that this people
may know, that thou art Jehovah. And accordingly
fire fell from the Lord, and consumed the burnt sa-
crifice, *Verse*, 38. The effect whereof was, That
all the people fell on their Faces, and said, *Jehovah*
he is God, Jehovah he is God, ver, 39. So we find
the Psalmist, *Psal.* 86, saying, *ver*, 7. *In the day*
of my trouble, I will call upon thee. And why? For
(saith he) *Thou wilt answer me.* But whereupon
was this his confidence founded? the next *verse*
sheweth where he saith, *Among the gods, none like un-*
to thee. This confirmeth his Faith of God's answer-
ing and hearing, that he was the true and living God,
and not like the Gods of the nations, that were but
dead and dumb idols, and could neither hear, nor help.
By this is the Lord truly differenced, and distinguish-
ed

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from all the *false and fictitious* god's in the world, at he, even he alone heareth and can answer the desires of his people: And this is a noble ground of strength and encouragement, that this is God's peculiar characteristick property; for be sure, as he will answer his Name; so will he be careful to prove himself to be Jehovah, the true and living God, that his people may know and find in experience, that the God they worship and serve, is indeed Jehovah.

3. Himself hath told us, *I/ai. 45. 19.* That *he did not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain.* He there confirming their faith of their return from captivity, by shewing them that he was Jehovah, & none else, & withal by shewing them that he never put his people to ask any thing of him, in vain; & consequently, that he would not put them to seek a delivery in vain and to no purpose: Whence we see, that there is ground of answer, even in the very prayers themselves; for if God command to pray, and to seek him, in that very command, there is a virtual promise of hearing and answering included; and that because the Lord Jehovah never bade his people seek him in vain. This then must be a strong encouragement into the duty, that the very command to Pray saith, God will hear; he never set any about prayer in vain.

4. The frequent promises made of God's answering the prayers of his people, do abundantly confirm this, *Matth, 7. 7.* *Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.* The same thing thrice upon the matter repeated, to give the further and fuller confirmation, *Matth, 21, 22.* *And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing ye shall receive.* Which tho' it primarily relate to their asking and believing by the faith of miracles, in order to the working of miracles as the foregoing verses evidence; yet it containeth a general truth useful even after that dispensation of miracles was to cease: as other scriptures clear particularly, *Mark. 11.* Where after our Lord had said,

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upon the same occasion, that that in *Matthew* was
spoken, ver. 24. *Therefore I say unto you, What
things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye re-
ceive, and ye shall have:* He subjoineth, ver, 25 26.
that, which cannot be restricted to any particular sea-
son, but hath place in all generations, saying, *And
when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against
any, that your Father also, which is in heaven, may
forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive,
neither will your Father, which is in heaven, forgive
your trespasses.* So *Luke*, 11. after that pattern of
prayer which Christ taught his disciples is summarily
mentioned, we are told how Christ proposed a pa-
rable, the evident tendency of which, was to confirm
them in the faith of this, that their prayers would be
heard and granted, *verse. 5, 6, 7. 8. And I say un-
to you, ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye
shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you: for e-
very one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh find-
eth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.* And as
if all this were not enough to give a full perswasion of
faith in this matter; he addeth ver, 11. 12. 13. That
which might contribute to remove all ground of fear
or scruple, saying, *If a son shall ask bread of any of
you, that is a father; will he give him a stone? or if
he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or
if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? if
ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto
your children: How much more shall your heavenly fa-
ther, give the holy spirit, to them that ask him?* which
passages not only hold forth a promise, with a strong
confirmation; but likewise have several particular &
strong grounds of this truth, that God will answer
the prayers and desires of his people, of which after-
wards. Another promise we have, *Jam, 1. 5. If any
of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all
men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be giv-
en him.* And tho' this be said in reference to a par-
ticular suit, viz. asking of wisdom: Yet as this
wisdom

wisdom is a comprehensive thing: to the same promise will hold as to other particulars, which are sought according to the will of God; according to that, 1 *Joh.* 5. 14. 15. *And this is the confidence that we have in him (or towards him) that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we have the petitions, that we desired of him.* Another promise we have. *Psal.* 91. 15. *He shall call upon me, and I will answer him,* So *Isai.* 58. 9. *Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer: thou shalt cry, and he shall say. here am I.* And *Chap.* 65. 24. *And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer: And while they are yet speaking, I will hear.* Hence it is, that all the children of God, when asking any thing according to his will, may press this promise; and say with *David.* *Psal.* 143. 1. *Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, in thy righteousness.*

5. That place of *Isai.* 65, 24. last cited, where the Lord saith, *Before they call, I will answer.* giveth a further ground of confirmation: for hence we not only see, that God is ready to hear the desires of his people, and will grant them their suits and prayers; but moreover, that he will come with a speedy answer; and not only hear, e're their petitions be well out of their mouth; but even prevent, as it were, their supplications and answer them before they call, thus he preventeth them with the blessings of goodness; as it is, *Psal.* 21. 3.

6. Upon this ground doth the Lord encourage his people to call upon him, that their crying shall not be in vain, *Psal.* 50. 15. *Call upon me, in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.* Here is a promise held forth of purpose to encourage to the duty: And sure, when the Lord proposeth this, as a special encouragement unto the duty, there need no scruples remain in our minds, concerning this hearing and answering in this due time. The

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like we have, *Psal. 81. 10.* The Lord would have his professing people renounce all strange god's, and embrace him who is Jehovah, alone, for their God; and in signe hereof would have them all upon him, and enlarging their hearts in their desires; with this encouraging promise that he would satisfie them, *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.* That is let thine heart be enlarged, and spare not to cry unto me, and seek great things of me, and I will satisfie all your desires, and grant you all you ask. There is the like encouragement proposed unto *Jeremiah*, while he was shut up, in the court of the prison, *Jer. 33. 3.* *Call unto me, and I will answer thee.* This may serve to confirm us, in the faith of this, that there is an answer and return of prayers to be believed and expected by his saints, when suiting for that, which is according to God's will.

7. The wise man tells us, *Prov. 11, 23.* That *the desire of the righteous is only good*, that is, all their desires that the righteous, as such, have; or all that they, as such pray for, and look for, is only good: And their desires and prayers being of this nature, must have a satisfactory return from him; who is a good God, and bountiful according to that other golden sentence, *Prov. 10. 24.* *The desire of the righteous shall be granted.* This then may be looked upon as another ground of confidence, and faith in this matter, that the desires of the righteous being good, and only good, shall be granted.

8. The old and constant love of the Father towards his children, giveth another sure ground for this truth, That God will answer the cries and desires of his people: And Christ himself layeth down this ground for the encouragement of his disciples, *Job. 16, 26. 27.* *At that day ye shall ask in my Name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father himself loveth you; because ye have loved me.* As if he had said, Whatsoever ye ask in my Name, the Father will give it to you; and I need

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not in a manner pray for the Father, or interceed with him, to give you what you ask ; for himself beareth an affection for you, and because he loveth you, you need not fear, that your supplications shall not receive a speedy dispatch.

9. Christ's office and work in reference to this, is another sure ground of our faith in this truth, and may assure us, that our supplications will be heard, and answered : Whatever good the saints are to ask of God, is purchased to them by the blood of Jesus : And will not the Father give, what his beloved Son hath purchased for the chosen and beloved ones ? 2. And again, what prayers they put up for these purchased blessings, are perfumed with Christ's incense, and presented in his censer, that they may be accepted of the Father. And again, 3dly. Christ himself as the great high priest appearing continually before God for us, interceedeth in the behalf of his people, and pleadeth their cause ; and as he presenteth their bills, so he backeth them, and supplicateth in a manner suitable to his glorified state, in their behalf : And each of these three grounds are sufficient to give full confirmation unto this truth, That the prayers of the saints shall be answered ; for neither will Christ's purchase be in vain, nor Christ's presenting of the supplications of his people, for the good things purchased ; nor yet his own intercessions on their behalf with the Father : For the Father heareth him always, *John*, 11, 41, 42. How much more then may we be assured of the truth, when we have these three sure grounds in one, for confirmation of it ?

10. The prayers and desires of the saints of God, are the very desires of the spirit of God ; for they are framed in their hearts by his operation, *Rom*, 8. 26 27. ' Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities ;
' for we know not what we should pray for, as we
' ought ; but the spirit it self maketh intercession for
' us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. And
' he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the

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‘ mind of the spirit, because he maketh intercession
‘ for the saints according to the will of God.’ Here
is the ground laid down, and both cleared and confirmed, even the saints know not what to pray for, as they ought; but they have one to pen their supplications for them, and to help their infirmities, by framing inward groanings in the heart, for what they would be at, when they cannot get words to express their desires: yea, the spirit thus turns their agent, and intercedeth for them, by framing the desires according to his own mind, tho’ always suitable to their case. Now what needeth any doubt of God’s hearing the petitions framed and penned by his own spirit? Yet moreover we see it is added, That he that searcheth the hearts (that is God, for this is a part of his prerogative royal, to search the heart, and to try the reins) knoweth what is the mind of the spirit; that is, he knoweth well enough what the supplications are, which the spirit hath framed in the heart of his children, and this knowing of the mind of the spirit, importeth his gracious accepting of the supplications so penned and presented, and his answering of them; for it is added, because according to the will of God, he maketh intercession for the saints.

II. The experience of the saints giveth another confirmation of this truth, and layeth before us another ground of encouragement, that our seeking of God shall not be in vain. *Jacob* did set to his seal unto this truth, when he said, *Gen*, 35. 3. *Let us arise and go to Bethel, and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me, in the day of my distress.* Such a signal return got he, that he could not forget it, and the remembrance of it set him a work, to erect an altar unto God, according to God’s command, at *Bethel*. *Samuel* found this true in his experience, *1 Sam*, 7. 9. *Samuel cried unto the Lord, for Israel, and the Lord heard and answered him.* So *Jehosaphat*, *2 Chron*, 20. and *Daniel*, chap, 9. and *Jonah*

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Jonah, chap, 2, 2. Many proofs and experiences
of the truth of this got *David*, as we see in the book
of the *Psalms*, particular *Psal.* 3, 4. and 6. 8.
and 18. 6. and 28. 6. and 116. 1. See also what
he saith, *Psal.* 10. 17. *Lord thou hast heard the de-*
sire of the humble, thou wilt prepare their heart, thou
wilt cause thine ear to hear. From this general con-
firmation of the truth from bygone experience ; he
concludeth it shall be so, for time to come ; See also
Psal. 4. 3. *The Lord will hear when I call unto*
Him.

12. As believers trust in the Lord for an answer,
according to his word, and wait in hope for a return
in God's good time, so the Lord will not disapoint
them of their hopes, knowing that hope, even deffered
maketh the heart sick, but the desire coming is a
tree of life. *Prov.* 13. 12. and the desire accomplished
is sweet to the soul, *verse.* 19. For the Lord will
not disapoint such as wait for him ; He will not let
them be put to shame, *Psal.* 25. 3. and 69, 6.
David was confident of this, when he said, *Psal.* 38
15. *For in thee, O Lord, do I hope, or on thee do I*
wait : thou wilt hear, or answer, O Lord my God.
He placed his hope and confidence in God, he waited
for a good answer ; And therefore he concluded,
that God would hear him and answer him : The
like confidence we find expressed by the church,
Micah, 7, 7. *Therefore I will look unto the Lord ;*
I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will
hear me. Upon this ground doth *Isai.* chap. 30.
18. 19. declare them blessed that wait for God, say-
ing,--- *Blessed are all they that wait for him, and why*
so ? For he will be very gracious to thee, at the voice
of thy cry, when he shall hear it, He will answer
thee.

13. The consideration of God's nature layeth
down a sure ground for this ; as Christ himself taught
us, in that forecited place, *Luke.* 11. 11, 12. 13.
For it fathers know how to give good things to their

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children, when they ask them: doth not God also know, how to satisfie the desires of his sons and daughters; seeing he is a father unto them, in a special manner, having adopted them to be his, out of pure love and free grace? And if fathers upon earth know how to satisfie the desires of their hungering children; How much more shall God, who is an heavenly Father, and whose affections and ways, are infinitely above man's? And again, if fathers here, who are evil and wicked, will answer the desires of their needy children; how much more will God, who is essentially good, and infinite and perfect in goodness, satisfie the earnest and hungry desires of his children? His mercy, and his tender mercies, will contribute hereunto. And therefore, seeing God will not deny himself, we may conclude, that surely he will hear the desire of the humble, and give his holy spirit to such, as ask him.

14. We heard above, how God hath heard sometimes the desires of carnal unbelievers; as is clear from *Psal.* 107. 25. 21. 28. 31. *Exod.* 22. 22. 23. *Job.* 34. 28. And this may yield ground of confidence, that he will much more hear the cries and desires of his own worthies, whom he loveth so dearly.

15. Yea we read that God satisfieth the desire of every living thing, *Psal.* 145. 15. 16. *The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfieth the desires of every living thing.* And shall we doubt of this truth, that God will satisfie the desires of his own people? Let us rather conclude with the *Psalmist.* *ibid.* verse 18. 19. *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfill the desires of them that fear him. He also will hear their cry, and will save them.*

C H A P XXIII.

God's answering of Prayer cleared.

IN order to the further clearing up of this comfortable point of truth, that God heareth and answereth the prayers and desires of his people, that doubts therean ent may be removed, and objections prevented; we shall lay down several propositions, tending to clear up this matter.

Proposition 1st. Tho' we are to regulate our prayers and desires, according to his laws, whereby our duty is pointed forth unto us, and an obligation laid upon us, to walk in all our ways accordingly. Yet his granting, or not granting of the particulars we ask, is regulated by his own decree and everlasting determination: For he worketh and doth all things, according to the counsel of his own will, *Ephes. 1. 11.* and nothing cometh to pass, but what he hath determined, and according, as he hath determined. Hence we are not to regulate our prayers, according to this secret untean will of his purpose and decree, which is not made known to us, but by the event; except in so far as he hath been pleased to signify the same by word or prophecy and prediction, or promise without, or with the confirmation of an oath, *Heb. 6. 17.* His law and command is our rule in prayer: And we are to pray for such things, as he hath made it our duty to pray for; whether he hath proposed & decreed to do that particular, or not. *David* did his duty, when he prayed for the life of his sick child, tho' God had determined to take the child away: Hence in our prayers, there ought to be much submission unto this holy will of God, which must necessary be fulfilled, because he is unchangeable, as in himself, so in his counsels and determinations; As

Christ

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Christ teacheth us by his examples, when he said *Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*; That is, if it can stand with thy everlasting and unchangeable purpose: And again, *Nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done.* There he submitted himself unto the holy will and determination of God. Hence we may see, that we must not infer, that our prayers are not acceptable to God, because the particular we asked is not granted; for their acceptableness, or not acceptableness is to be tried and regulated, not by his hid and eternal purposes; but by his expressed will and law; not by his will, as the supreme disposer of all events; but by his will as the supreme law-giver: And therefore, if our prayers, for matter & manner, be according to his law and commandment they will be accepted of him, through Jesus Christ, tho' the particular possibly, which we ask be such, as he hath determined not to do: As we see in *Jeremiah's* praying for *Judah*, *Jerem.* 14, and 15. and in *Samuel's* praying for *Saul*, *1 Sam.* 16. 1.

Propos. 2. As it is a great condescendency in God, to hear us, poor miserable sinners, at any time, in any particular whatsoever: So we must not think, that by his condescending thus unto us, he hath wholly laid aside his sovereignty, and absolute supremacy, whereby he doth whatsoever he will. He seeth good for the glory of his own name, to give open proofs and declarations of this, his absolute sovereignty, & therefore sometimes will he do what he seeth good, tho' contrary to the desire of his people, that he may be seen and known to be God, *Who doth whatsoever he pleaseth, in heaven and in earth, and in the seas, and in all deep places,* *Psal.* 135. 6. As a father, tho' he will not say his child nay, in what he seeth is good and necessary for him, yet he will not gratifie or answer him in all his *Yeas* and *Nays*; but will let him know, that he will do only what pleaseth him, that the child may learn to carry with all submission and due respect to his father. And how
should

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Should we else know, that God were a great sovereign
& an absolute and free dispenser of his favours, if he
saw it not good sometimes to keep us standing long
at his door, yea, sometimes refuse us altogether the
thing, which we ask? Know therefore, that not-
withstanding of his wonderful condescension, out of
love and free grace, in and through Jesus Christ; yet
he remaineth an absolute sovereign, an unlimited
prince: And therefore will shew himself a God, who
will not be turned off his purposes, even by his own
people; but will be whatever his soul desireth, *Job*, 23.
13. that we may learn to be afraid of him, *verse*, 15.
and to stoop before him, and acknowledge him to be
God. Whence we see, God may sometimes refuse to
grant the particulars, which his people seek, not as angry
at their prayers: but as loving to shew forth the ma-
jesty of his sovereignty.

Propos. 3. We should look on Prayer, as a mean
appointed of God, for attaining of the good things
we ask and desire, as preaching and other like duties
are: Now we know, the Lord is pleased to give his
blessing with preaching, as he seeth Good; and a
minister is not to think, that his labour is in vain, be-
fore the Lord. Always when he seeth not the wish-
ed-for fruit, following his pains; but to know, that
when they carry faithfully, in their duty, they are
unto God a sweet savour of Christ, even in them that
perish, to whom they are the savour of death
unto death, *2 Cor.* 2. 15, 26, So it is in prayer,
we may be accepted therein, tho' the Lord be not
pleased so to bless the same, as to make it an effectual
means for attaining of the particular, we ask, or
would have; and we should go about it, as a duty
and a mean, leaving the blessing and event unto him,
who is wiser than we are, and knoweth what is
best.

Propos. 4. We should look on prayer, as a peace
of that homage, which is due to God from us, and
as a solemn declaration, and testimony of our acknow-
ledging

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ledging of him to be God over all, blessed for ever,
the great sovereign, and author of all good ; and of
our profession of dependence upon him in all things,
and of submission to him, who is God : And there-
fore should not think our labour lost, in prayer, tho'
we attain not unto satisfaction, as to the particulars,
we pray for : It is no small advantage, if by, and in
prayer we get our hearts poured out before God, &
more impressed with the sense of our indigency, and
of the necessity of a constant adherence to, and de-
pendence on him in all things ; and of submission to
him, and more fixed in a resolution to wait upon
him, for all we want. Yea, it should be looked u-
pon, as a great evidence of his acceptance and favour-
able condescension to us, if in prayer, we be wrought
up unto a due apprehension of God's majesty, and
to a suitable and sensible frame of spirit, to acknow-
ledge him, the Lord of our life, and all we enjoy &
need, and to a willingness and readiness to celebrate
his praises upon that account.

Propos. 5. We must not think that every delay
to give us a return to our prayers, is a denial of an an-
swer: God may think it good to delay our answer,
and yet give it at length. We are sometimes too
peremptor, and too ready to set limits unto the holy
one of *Israel*, and thus provoke him to anger ; and
therefore the Lord may see it good to delay the answer
which yet he is resolved to give at length: And that
for wise and holy ends. As *1st*. To teach us all
due submission, and reverence, and to know, that
he is an absolute God, and giveth all things freely,
and will not be stinted or limited to a time by us ;
but will give, as what he will, so in what time & sea-
son he will. *2^{dly}*. To teach us patience in waiting
at the posts of his door: We are oft hasty, and our
impatience is ready to break forth to God's dishonour;
and this is no suitable frame for suppliants ; beggars
should have much patience, and wait until they get
their alms ; and it sets them not to say, either give
me

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ne now my alms, or I will wait no longer for it. 3dly. To try our faith, if we can believe his word, and rest upon his promise, and live in hope, tho' the fig-tree doth not blossom at present. 4thly. To stir up and awaken us to be more earnest and serious in our petitions: Delays will make us double, our diligence, and cause us renew our suits with more zeal and fervour of spirit, and be importunate. 5thly. To cause us prize the mercy more, and make it the more welcome when it cometh; for, what we long-look for we will have an high esteem of, and welcome with thankfulness, when it cometh. 6thly. To put us in case to remark more the faithfulness and goodness of God, when after a long delay, he hath made good his faithful promise; his faithfulness will then appear with a witness, and have a glorious splendor with it. 7thly. To fit us more for the mercy, that we are asking, and to put us in better case to receive it, and to improve it; many times if we got the good things we asked at the very time, when we asked them, we would be more in case to abuse them, and dishonour God by them, than make any good improvement of them, either for God's glory, or for our own good. 8thly. He may delay to give the good things we ask, till his own appointed time come, wherein he seeth the granting of the mercy will be more for his own glory, and give more occasion for setting forth of his praise. 9thly. He may delay until he have many petitions to answer at once; whether many of our own or the petitions of many others with ours; that thus thanks may be given by many together, for one and the same mercy, whether granted to persons, as 2 Cor, 1, 11. or to a land. He may delay to grant the prayed-for reformation of a church, until many children may be brought in, and they join together with the old christians in prayer, for this mercy, that so he may get a song of praise from all together. 10thly. Some mercies sought after, may be fitter for the posterity, than for the present generation; And therefore

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fore must be delayed. Thus, when the Lord is pleased to delay an answer for these and the like weighty reasons, we must not thence infer, That he will not hear at all ; or that he is not hearing, because he is not presently granting the thing that we are desiring.

Propos. 6. Hence we must distinguish betwixt God's answering prayers, and his answering them in our days, who put them up. We must not think that he giveth not a return to our prayers, because he giveth not the return in our own days. He may and often doth answer the prayers of the fathers, in the day of their posterity. When the old church prayed for the coming of the *Messiah*, their prayers were heard when the *Messiah* came, in the fulness of time, tho' not in their days. As the prophets of old prophesied of the grace, that should come, in the New Testament-Days, & enquired and searched diligently after it ; so we may suppose they prayed for it ; and as it was revealed unto them, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things, which are now reported, 1 *Pet.* 1, 11, 12. So they were to believe, that their prayers would be answered in due time, though not in their own days.

Propos. 7. We must likewise distinguish betwixt a begun answer and a compleat answer. When the Lord giveth an answer in part, or giveth the beginnings thereof, we must not say, he doth not answer ; tho' the whole be not yet granted. Several years may pass ere the begun mercy be compleated ; and many of our greatest desires will not be compleatly granted, until the restitution of all things come and the end be, that Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father, and the last enemy death be destroyed, and shall be destroyed, and shall be swallowed up in victory. And therefore we must be satisfied with the first fruits and beginnings, and wait in faith, until the full harvest come.

Propos. 8.

Propos. 8. God may grant the particular which we ask, and yet not grant it in the mode and way, that we would have it in : When a people are praying for a delivery, they may possibly expect that he should answer them with terrible things, in his righteousness, as *Psal. 65. 5.* And so deliver them, and save them by bow, or by sword, or by battle, by horses, or by horse-men ; and he may think good, not to save them that way, but by the Lord their God, as *Hos, 1. 7.* It should satisfy us, if he be pleased to give us the mercy, we are asking, tho' he should be pleased to take another way, than we would possibly have thought. We should not be like petted children, that think they get nothing if they get not what they ask in the very manner and way that they would have it.

Propos. 9. We must distinguish betwixt his answering to our sense and feeling. We must not always say, He doth not answer us, because he makes us not sensible of the answer, when it cometh ; what if the Lord see it good, to hide our eyes from seeing what he hath done to us or for us, according to our prayers ? Must we question his faithfulness and truth, because our senses are not satisfied ? Many spiritual mercies may be granted, and they may be under ground, and we not able to perceive them, till long thereafter, that we see the effects thereof ; as when we are seeking more grace, and strength to serve the Lord ; this desire may be granted and we not perceive it, till it appear afterward in its effects. And there are many returns of prayer, that we must see only by faith in the promise of God, and therewith rest satisfied.

Propos. 10. We must distinguish betwixt God's answering our prayers, and his giving us the particular, which we asked. We may not always say, That God heareth us not, because he doth not give us the very particular we ask : For he may see it good for many reasons to withhold the particular favour from us, that we would be at : As *1/2.* Because possibly that

that particular would not be for our good and advantage; but would do much harm; than good; for we are oft like unwise children, crying for that which is not good for us; and the Lord, as a wise and tender Father, will give but what he seeth shall do us good, and not harm. *2dly.* He will with-hold the particular, that he may try and exercise our submission to him, in all these things; and learn us to pray with all due submission, as sensible of our own folly and witlefness; and as believing his goodness, and confiding therein, to roll ourselves on him, and put a blank in his hand, giving him full liberty to grant, or not grant that particular, as he seeth good.

3dly. So likewise he may with-hold the particular to exercise our faith in his fidelity, and care: It is no great difficulty to believe, that God is faithful, in keeping promise, when he is giving us all we ask; nor to believe that he is then tender and careful of us; But to believe this, when God refuseth to give the thing we would be at, there is the difficulty; and then is faith found to be faith, when in hope, it can believe against hope. *4thly.* He may with-hold the particular, when he is minding to give something better for us, in its place: And how that is, we shall hear. Seeing then that God may for wise and holy reasons, refuse to give us the particular benefit we seek, and yet not forget us, or our supplications, we must not conclude, that he heareth us not, because he with-holdeth the particular.

Propos. 11. We cannot say, that God doth not hear our prayers, when tho' he grant not the particular we ask. yet he giveth instead thereof, that, which is really better for us: If he give us wine instead of water, and a feast instead of a morsel of bread, we cannot but say, He hath heard our prayers. If we have been seeking a temporal blessing, and he instead thereof, giveth us a spiritual blessing, can we say that our prayers are rejected? Whatever folly and ignorance may make a child think and say, when
instead

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instead of drink, which he was asking in a fever, his father giveth some other thing fit for the distemper, tho' less pleasant to the taste; yet every one, that is wise, will think the child hath no cause to complain. No more have we, when God instead of the particular thing, which we were desirous of, is pleased to give us what is fitter for our condition, and more for our spiritual advantage. Many a time we are more earnest for temporal favours, deliveries and out-gates, than for spiritual: And if God, instead of granting us the temporal mercy, give a spiritual blessing in the room thereof; we have great reason, not only to be satisfied, but to bless Him.

Propos. 12. If God make up the refusal of a particular, or a denial thereof, with some-thing that is as good, or better for us, all things considered, or more for God's glory; We cannot say, but he heareth our prayers: Now the Lord hath many ways how to make up this to us: As we see, 1st. when *Paul* was troubled with a tempting messenger of Satan that did buffet him, he besought the Lord thrice to be delivered herefrom, which did speak out his earnest desire to be delivered from this evil, 2 *Cor*, 12, 7. 8. Yet we see the Lord did not grant him that particular, at that time, as he desired: but made up that want another way, that was as good for *Paul*, and more for the glory of God: For *verse*, 9, It is said, That God said unto him for answer, *My grace is sufficient for thee*: So that *Paul* had no cause to complain, that his prayer was not heard, when instead of delivery from the temptation, he got inward strength & grace to enable him to stand under it. 2^{dly}. The Lord maketh up this want abundantly, when he giveth submission of heart under it; so that the man is satisfied, and acquiesceth heartily in what God hath done: As when *David* was praying for the life of the child, God would not grant him that particular desire; yet we see *David* was wrought up, thro' God's grace, unto a sweet submission; for when he

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heard that the child was dead, he rose from the earth
& washed, and anointed himself, & changed his ap-
parel, and came into the house of the Lord and wor-
shipped, 2 Sam. 12. 18. 19. 20. 3dly. The Lord
maketh up this want, when he giveth grace to adore
him, to stoop before him, and to justifie and glorifie
him in all his ways, as just, holy and righteous: So
Psal. 22. 2. the *Psalmist* said, *O my God, I cry in the
daytime, but thou hearest not, and in the night season,
and am not silent.* He cried night and day, but he got
not the thing he cried for: What made up this want?
See what he saith, *verse, 3.* *But thou art holy, O thou
that inhabitest the praises of Israel.* He gave glory
unto God, as the holy and righteous One, that could
do him no wrong. 4thly. This want is richly made
up, when under it they can be encouraged to continue
at the duty, and not give it over for all that dissa-
pointment; as the *Psalmist* in the forecited place,
Psal, 22. notwithstanding of his not being heard; he
will not give-over, but continueth pressing his suits
and confirming his faith of a good answer, from
this ground, among others, *verse, 4. 5.* That the
fathers or others before him, got a gracious answer
from God. *Our fathers trusted in thee, they trusted, &
thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were
delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confound-
ed.* So the church would not give over crying un-
to God, howbeit he had for a long time, seemed
angry against the prayers of his people, *Psal, 80, 4.*
So we see in *Heman. Psal. 88.* He cried day and
night, *ver. 1.* and again *ver. 9.* He called daily up-
on the Lord, and streached out his hands unto him:
Yet we see through the whole *Psalme*, that his trouble
continued long; yet notwithstanding we find him
resolving to persist in the duty, *ver. 13.* *But unto
thee have I cried. O Lord, and in the morning shall
my prayer prevent thee.* 5thly. This want is also
made up unto them, when the disappointments work
savourily upon them, and cause them have low and
mean

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 mean thoughts of themselves: For *Psal.* 22. 6. he
 saith, *I am a worm, and no man, &c.* 6thly. This
 want is made up, and needs not be missed, when
 hereby the soul is brought to make surework of its in-
 terest in God, and is made to renew grips of him;
 as in the forecited places *Psal.* 22. 2. *O my God, I*
cry unto thee. *Psal.* 88. 1. *O Lord God of my salva-*
tion. 7thly. This want is made up, when it fareth
 with them, as it did with *David*, *Psal.* 35. 13:
 when he prayed and humbled himself for his enemies,
 when they were sick; *his prayers returned unto his own*
bosome. So when they have been praying for others,
 and have not obtained their desire, if God return their
 prayers into their own bosome, and give themselves
 that which they were seeking for others, they cannot
 say, they are losers. So we see, the Lord hath
 many ways, how to make up this want of the parti-
 cular, his people are asking; and so long, as he giv-
 eth us that, which is as good, or better for us, we
 have no cause to say, That he heareth us not.

Propos. 13. We cannot say, That the Lord doth
 not hear or answer the prayers of his people, tho' they
 get not the particular they are asking; when they are
 answered according to the holy end, intention and
 design, which principally they had before their eyes,
 and were moved by to seek these things: As 1st.
 They intend, when they pray for any thing, as be-
 cometh the children of God, God's glory chiefly and
 principally. 2dly. The common good of the church
 and people of God. And 3dly. Their own everlast-
 ing happiness; when any of their prayers are inconsis-
 tent with these, or with any of these, they are not
 awful prayers, and should not be put up: But when
 they pray for particulars, that either are not for pro-
 moving of God's glory, or are more for their own
 particular good and self-ends, then for the common
 good, or for the church of God; or for particulars,
 that will prove hurtful to their souls; It is God's
 goodness that he granteth not these suits: And there

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being no promise of such things made, there is no ground to expect them by prayer. As also when we pray for such things as are lawful, and seem convenient, and so carry in them no repugnancy unto these three great ends, but stand in a subordination thereunto; The Lord may see it good, not to grant these particulars; and yet we cannot say, when he doth not grant them, that he answereth not our prayers; for when these great ends are more attained by other means and particulars, which the Lord giveth, than by these, that we propose or desire, our principle desire, our principal desires are granted: God's glory is advanced, the church's good is promoted, and the work of God, in our souls is carried on towards perfection, by more suitable and effectual means, than such were, that we projected, and what have we then to complain of?

Propos. 14. When the Lord at length shall admit the soul, into intimate and perpetual fellowship with himself in glory, and crown it with that everlasting crown of eternal and unchangable felicity; will there be any petitions left unanswered? Sure, that uncorruptible and undefiled inheritance, that fadeth not away, but is reserved in the heavens, will richly make up all wants, and cause the believer sing, and say, now all my desires are granted, all my prayers are heard, I have all my asking, and more than ever I did ask; for I knew not what this life was, when I sought it; He hath done exceeding abundantly above all that ever I could ask or think, according to that *Eph. 3. 20.*

Propos. 15. We must not think, that God doth not answer the prayers of his people, because he doth not answer every inordinate desire of theirs: We must not distinguish between prayer lawful and commendable, both as to the matter, and the manner; and unlawful and inordinate desires: It is prayers put up for things lawful, according to the will of God,

Chap. XXIV. *Some Objections answered* 260
God, and presented in the right manner, as was formerly shewed, that we speak of, when we say, The Lord heareth them, and will return an answer to them, in his own good time.

C H A P. XXIV.

Some Objections answered.

THo' by what we have said, in the foregoing Chapter, we may see how all objections, that can be moved against this comfortable truth, That God heareth and answereth the prayers of his people, that are put up in a right manner, and for things agreeable to his holy will, may be answered: Yet for further impressing of this truth, we shall move an objection or two, and answer the same upon grounds mentioned: and hence make it manifest, how worthy of rebuke such are, as do not firmly believe this truth, but either question it, or doubt thereanent, and that because they have not observed, That God hath answered their desires, as to some particulars. For,

First, They will possibly object, and say, we have prayed long for the coming of the kingdom of Christ, and for the prosperity of his people; and for the prosperity of his people; and for the overthrow of enemies; and we see no appearance of an answer; yea, we see and observe the contrary. Where is then the truth of this assertion?

But for *Answer*, They would know, 1st. That it is not said, That God will not answer the prayers of his people immediately, and presently after they are put up, or at the very time, wherein they possibly expected an answer: He is God only wise and knoweth the fittest seasons; and he is an absolute Lord, and hath the times and seasons, in his own hand; and may freely give out his favours when and

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at what season he will, no man can set limites to the
holy One of Israel, here.

Hence 2dly. For all this delay, God may and will
grant a good and satisfactory return unto these pray-
ers, in his own appointed and fit season, tho' many
of those, who have earnestly prayed for these favours
should die, before the answer come. God's delaying
is no Nay-say; and if the return come, in the due
and appointed season, who can say. That God hath
not heard the prayers of his people; albeit many of
them be gone to their graves, without a sight of the
return, except by faith, by which they were called to
embrace the return, afar off; as the ancient believers
who received not the promise, in its accomplish-
ments; yet in faith saw them afar off, and were per-
suaded of them and embraced them? *Heb. 11. 13.*

3. If they have been so foolish, as to limite the
Lord unto a day, or a year; must the Lord be un-
faithful, if he answer them not according to their
foolish and sinful imaginations and prescriptions?
Had they any promise, That God would do these
things before such a year, or in their days? And if
they had no promise, nor prophecy, nor grounds
from God's word, to expect such changes, in their
day why did they limite the holy one of Israel? why
did they, in their rash, proud and sinful imaginati-
ons set God a day? And why will they add a further
sin unto this, that is, quarrel with God or question
his truth and fidelity, because he followeth not their
humours in every *punctilia*?

4. What if they shall yet see, e're they die, some
breaking-up of the day, that they are long looking for?
That may come in a day which hath not come
in a year. Are not the Lord's mercies many times
very surprizing? Hath he not come, at several times
very surprizing? Hath he not come, at several
times, very unexpectedly? And What know they,
what may be e're they go off the stage? Are they
not called to live by faith, and keep up hope, and pos-
ses their souls in patience?

5. . . Wha

5. What know they, but the Lord is waiting to be gracious, as it is said, *Isai. 30. 18* ? Are they assured, That he will be favourable no more, and that he will never own his interest again ? And if they dare not say thus, why will they not give the Lord liberty to make choice of the fittest seasons, wherein he may be most glorified, in his faithfulness ? Will it not be more fit for his glory, to give a return to their prayers, and to the prayers of others after them, all at once ? Will not the children and posterity see great cause of blessing the Lord, when at once, or in one day, as it were, he shall give them a full harvest of returns, for which both they and their fathers have been labouring ? What joy was it to the returning captives out of *Babylon*, to consider, how the Lord was bestowing upon them the great favour and mercy, that they and their fathers before them had been long Praying for.

6. The saints of old did not question God's faithfulness, because all the great promises, whereupon they prayed were not actually performed in their days : but they died in the faith, as we heard from, *Heb. 11. 13*. And why should not we do so now ? When the great promise of the *Messias* came to be fulfilled, the children of God did not quarrel with him, that the performance came no sooner but *blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for visiting and redeeming his people, and raising up an horn of salvation for them, as he spake, by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began, that they should be saved from their enemies, and from the hand of all that hate them ; to perform the mercy, promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant. &c. Luke, 1. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. &c.*

7. May it not satisfy us, That God will make all good in end, and give a real being unto all his great promises : Whereby the same family and stock shall find all verified, tho' every individual person of that family and stock shall not see this, in their days ? If

the Lord will have our generation to sow in tears, & another to reap in joy, may not that satisfy us, that the same flock and family of God's children shall enjoy it? If the labouring man pray for a blessing on the seed sown, and die before the harvest come, is not his prayer heard, when his wife and children in due time, reap a plentiful harvest.

8. When in end Christ shall triumph over all his enemies, and set all his children upon his throne in glory; and put them to judge their enemies; will they have any cause then to complain of God's not making good his promise? Will not all the children then say, that they are satisfied to the full, and that all their prayers are answered, and more than answered?

Secondly. It may be possibly *Objected* by some, That they have been long seeking by prayer, some particular for themselves; and have had no return.

For *Answer*, I shall propose these questions; by which every one, who moveth such an objection, may know what way to stop their own mouths.

1. What if that particular hath not been, according to God's revealed will? The promise of hearing is only made to such prayers, as are according to his will. *Joh, 5. 14.* Therefore this should be tried; and if it be found, that such desires are not warranted by the word; can they with any colour of reason question God's promise and faithfulness, when he answereth not such desires? They ought to be glad, That the Lord hath not answered them according to the idols of their heart, and given them in his displeasure, what they sinfully desired; as he threatened to do, & hath done to some.

2. Suppose the thing asked by prayer was good and lawful; yet what if it was not expedient and profitable? Yea, what if it had proven really hurtful unto us, if we had gotten it, at that time? We may, in our folly, and ignorance seek that, which tho' good

good in itself, and useful sometimes, may prove very noxious to us, at that instant. Wine may prove refreshing and strengthening some times; but to a person, while in a fever, would prove noxious and hurtful, and shall we then quarrel with God, because he hath not given us; what would really hurt and undo us? He hath promised no such thing: And our foolish imaginations is no rule to him.

3. Suppose the thing asked were both good and profitable; yet what if they have not asked in faith, but doubting? The promise is made to such, as ask in faith, *Matth*, 21. 22. *Jam*, 1. 6. 7. And if any have asked, and prejudged themselves of an answer, by not asking in faith, according as they were called and obliged to do, shall the Lord bear the blame of their not receiving of what they did not believe to receive? Why will they rather quarrel with God, & question his faithfulness, than complain of their own sinful way of asking, and of their own unbelieving hearts? Were it not more sutable for them, to charge sin home upon themselves, than thus impute iniquity unto their maker, without all ground, or any just occasion?

4. What if there hath not been that seriousness and earnestness, of fervency in their desires, that ought to have been? Shall God be blamed for not answering such prayers, as are put with a great measure of indifferency and carelessness, and in which the praying man's heart and soul is not? We are told, *Jam*, 5. 16. That the fervent effectual prayer, or the prayer that is inwrought, or is, as it were, possessed with the spirit of God, availeth much: And what can then be expected of such prayers, as flow from no such principle or fervour, zeal, earnestness, desire, or spiritual hunger; but die in the very mouth, and are not with carefulness levelled at any mark; but are shot forth at random? Shall we blame God for not answering these prayers, that we were indifferent whether we should get an answer to, or not?

5. Suppose

5. Suppose that there was some earnestness and seriousness in petitioning; yet what if all this zeal, and earnestness was but wild-fire? What if their designs and intentions were corrupt and carnal? Shall we think, that God hath promised to answer any such prayers? See what James said, *Chap. 4. 3. Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts:* Evil intentions may marr all our pains and labour; and in this case, we should lay the blame of our not being heard upon our selves, and not upon the Lord.

6. Suppose that nothing of this either, should be sensibly observed yet what if there have been failings, as to the right manner of praying, in several other particulars; which may be searched and found by what was said above *Chapters XIII and XIV*, of the right manner of going about prayer? If we have come short of our duty, shall we blame the Lord, that we come not speed? Why do we not rather justify him, and condemn our selves, seeing we are truly condemnable? If we would expect his answering of our prayers, we must labour to pray in a right manner; according to his appointment.

7. Chiefly this is considerable: What if the petitions have been put up, and not in the Name of Christ, or with that due use-making of him, that is requisite in prayer, and was declared above, *Chapters XV and XVI*? Shall we think, that God is not as good, as his word, because he answereth not such petitions, as have been presented and put up, not in the Name of Christ, but in our own Name; when the promise here is expressly made to such askings, as are in the Name of Christ? *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, I will do it.*

8. Tho' the Lord hath not yet granted that particular petition; yet may he not yet grant it hereafter? And if he grant it hereafter? in such a time and season, as he seeth best, shall he not be found faithful? What if he be waiting the
best

Chap. XXIV. *Some Objections answered.* 265
best opportunity, wherein to give it, even the,
even the opportunity, wherein the giving
of that mercy will be most to his own glory,
to the declaring of him to be faithful and true;
and will also be most to their spiritual good and advantage? And if it be thus, have we any cause to complain? Can we say, he answereth not, because he delayeth to answer? Is every delay a nay-say?

9. What if they have been too peremptor with God, in the matter? And what if God will let them know, that he alone is sovereign; and teach them to pray with more reverence and submission? may not the Lord give his favours, as seemeth him good? And should beggars be carvers, and unmannerly in their desires? And when God will punish for this unfutable behaviour; shall we blame him? should we be as peremptor and urgent with him, as when particulars not absolutely promised, nor having a necessary connection with our salvation, as in these more necessary things? And if the Lord will teach us to carry more suitably, shall we call into question his truth and faithfulness?

10. What if God hath granted the thing, that was asked, in part, or hath begun to answer; and they have taken no notice thereof; whether through grief, fainting of heart, and excessive sorrow, because of some present sad dispensation, wherewith that begun mercy is accompanied; as when the *Israelites* could not hearken to *Moses* for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage, *Exod.* 6. 9. and so were not in case to take any notice of their begun delivery: Or of the Lord's beginning to answer their desires. See the like in *Job*, 9. 16. 17. *If I had called (saith he) and he had answered me. yet would I not believe, that he had hearkned to my voice: For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause:* Or, whether because they see not the answer in all things, answering their mind, and satisfying their desires? Shall they in this case say, that the
Lord

Lord hath forgotten to be gracious : and that he taketh no notice of their prayers and desires : How unreasonable were this ?

11. What if God hath given that which is as good ; or better, in lieu of that particular ? Should not he be acknowledged, in this his wisdom and goodness ? Should we say, he doth not answer, because he giveth not the very particular we are asking ; tho' in the mean time, he giveth that which is much better for us, and that we would acknowledge to be so, if we had spiritual eyes to see, what indeed were for our good : If he hath given us grace to stand under the temptation, against which we were praying, that his power may be seen and observed, in our weakness, instead of delivering us wholly from the temptation ; as he did to *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 12. Shall we say, he hath not answered us ? Or, if he give grace to submit to him, and to his good pleasure ; that we are made to say with Christ, not our will, but thy will be done ; shall we say, he giveth us nothing, or that he regardeth not our suits ? Or if he give inward Peace of mind, and quietness to rest in hope and confidence, that the full answer shall come in due time ; as he giveth to *Hannah*, when she went away, and her countenance was no more sad, 1 *Sam.* 1, 18. Shall we say, we get nothing ? May not that satisfy us, until more come ? Or if he accept our prayer off our hands, and take it for good service done unto him, and intimate this to our souls ; shall he, notwithstanding of this, be looked upon, as stopping his ears from our supplications ? Or, if we fix a persuasion in the soul that all will be granted in due time, and cause the heart rest upon his faithful word and promise, and wait in patience ; Shall we say, That that is nothing ? Or if he fix the soul, notwithstanding of these delays, or seeming refusals, in the love of himself, and in the resolution to abide by the duty, and not to give it over ; Shall this be nothing ? shall

Shall we under these and the like receipts, cry out, that God doth not hear, nor regard our prayers?

12. What if the Lord be delaying to grant them their particular desire, out of special desire and kindness unto them? Shall he in that case be thought to be regardless of their prayers? If the Lord delay to give the mercy, until they be in a fit case to receive it, and improve it; or until they be humbled more, or made to acknowledge their dependence on him the more, and to value his mercy and goodness more: and so put in case to be more thankful for the mercy, when it is granted; can they say, that he regardeth not their prayers? Or have they any cause to complain?

13. What if they have gotten other petitions granted before, and have not duly with thankfulness acknowledged the same; will they blame the Lord now for not granting them at the first, what they seek at the first, what they seek again? If by delaying to grant them their new suits, he be calling them to mind this sin, and to punish them therefore, should they not acknowledge their iniquity, and bear his indignation because they have sinned against him, rather than quarrel with him upon this account?

By these particulars we may see, what might further be said, in this case: And by what is said unto these two objections, we may see, what may be said to others of the same kind, that may be proposed; which, for brevities sake, we shall name. And from all, that hath been said, we may draw a noble encouragement unto this duty of prayer; for who would not follow that trade, by which they may expect such rich and upmaking gain? Who would not pray, when they hear, how thereby they will get all they desire, or can ask? What more security can we desire for this, than the word and promise of him, who is truth it self? And hath he not plainly and distinctly here said, that whatever we shall ask in his Name, he will do it? And have we not here encouragement

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couragement enough to continue instant in prayer,
and to persist in it, seeing we have ground to believe,
that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord ; for
tho' he delay sometimes to give an answer, for holy
and wise reasons ; yet he will give a good answer in
end, and satisfy all the desires of his people ; The
day is coming, when they shall say, they have got a
full return to all their prayers ; and they would not
wish it had been otherwise with them, than it was,
through his holy and wise dispensations.

C H A P. XXV.

A Second Use, shewing that we should look for our answer : and the evils of neglecting this.

IN the next place, this truth pointeth forth the duty of praying persons, even after they have prayed, to look up, as it is, *Psal.* 5. 3. and to hear what God the Lord will speak : as it is *Psal.* 85. 8. As also, we see hence ground of rebuke to such, as slight and neglect this duty of looking after their prayers, and seeing what is become of them ; the evil of which sin, we shall first discover, in some particulars ; and then shall point forth some things to clear up this duty of looking for returns to our prayers.

How evil it is, not to look after a return to our prayers, may appear from these particulars, which will discover both the sin of it, and the evil that attendeth it.

1. This evil sayeth, That we have been but praying for a fashion, and not in earnest, that our hearts have not been in our requests ; and that have no value for the particulars we have been seeking : For if our prayers had been hearty, and had flowed from a heart-sensible of our great wants and necessities, we could not but look after our suits, to see what

what is become of them. If a man give in a petition or bill of complaint, in any particular, that did concern his life, or estate, unto the king, or unto magistrates, that could help him; would he not enquire afterward, what was done with his supplication; and what became of it, and what answer was made thereunto? Sure it would be a very seckless matter, that he would not think worthy of this after enquiry.

2. This will provoke God to give no answer at all; If we cast our petitions thus at our heels, How can we think, that God should answer them? When *David* was earnest with the Lord, and would fain have had the thing he desired granted to him, *Psal.* 5. as appeareth by his frequent reiterating of this his desire to be heard, *verse.* 1. and 2. he tells the Lord, *verse.* 3. that he would direct his prayer to God, & would look up; That is, he would look what was become of it, and what answer the Lord had given to it. Will a king grant the supplication of a poor man, when he hears, that he mindeth never to look after the same, nor enquire once, what answer will be given to it?

3. If we look not thus after our prayers, to see what answer God giveth to them, if he shall be pleased, for his own holy ends, to grant what we have petitioned for, what right use can we make of that answer? Or how can we carry suitably unto God's goodness, manifested therein? Will we not in this case, be necessarily in hazard of despising the goodness of the Lord, and of contracting more sin upon our selves? Sure we cannot be engaged to the Lord, in all thankfulness, upon the account of his favouring us with an answer unto our desires, when we expect not a return of them, as *Psal.* 66. 19. Nor can we upon this account be engaged to love the Lord more, as *David* was, *Psal.* 1. 16. 1. When he said, *I love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.* Nor can we upon this account be engaged

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gaged to pray more, and to double our suits, as *David* did upon the same account, in the *Psalms* cited
116. 2. *Because he hath inclined his ear unto me; therefore will I call upon him, as long as I live.*

4. If we look not after our supplications, to see what answer is given thereunto, we cannot carry suitably upon God's delaying to answer: we shall not know how to be suitably affected therewith, or what to make of that dispensation: If *Paul* had not looked after his prayers, what could he have made of God's saying him nay, in the particular, for that time? Would he have doubled his diligence, and put in the same bill again, and the third time? would he have known or experienced God's goodness in strengthening him with strength in his soul, and in giving him sufficiency of grace, to stand under the load of temptation? We can not, upon God's delaying to answer, be put to pray, and to pray again: We cannot look upon the dispensation, as calling us to search our ways, & to see if we be regarding iniquity in our heart, which will stop or put a demure to an answer. *Psal.* 66. 18.

5. If we look not after our supplications, we cannot understand the language, nor make a right use of the Lord's denying us in the particular. We cannot enquire whether there be wrath written on it, or mercy wrapped up in it. There is a time, when God is angry at the prayers of his people, as *Psal.* 80. 4 & so he will not answer, because of a quarrel he hath against their persons, for their backslidings: And if this be our case, we cannot be sensible of his controversy against us evidenced thereby, & so cannot with the church there, cry, *Turn us, and we shall be turned.* Nor in this case, can we with the church *Lam.* 3. 8. make this a matter of lamentation, saying, *Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer.* Upon the other hand, when in mercy he withholdeth the particular, and giveth something better for us, in lieu thereof, we cannot express, our sense hereof, and thankfulness herefore; nor read
our

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our engagements unto God, and his helping us to
submission. unto his holy will, in all time coming.

6. If we look not after our prayers, we profess
our selves regardless of the promises ; and say, they
are not worthy to be believed ; for our carriage hath
this language with it. Tho' we have promises that
our prayers shall be heard, and we have now prayed ;
yet we need not be at the pains to stand so long at
God's door, waiting for an answer ; for the Promi-
ses are vain things, and not truth in them ; And
therefore we will never look after our prayers, to see
what answer we get ; for it is in vain, no answer
will come. And what an indignity is hereby done
unto God, every one may see. Or else we say, that
prayer is no means, whereby the Lord is pleased to
bring about the accomplishment of of his word and
promise, contrary to *Ezek.* 36, 37. For if we did
believe this, we would use prayer, as a means, and
so look after our prayers, to see whether thereby the
good things promised were conferred or not.

7. When we look not after our prayers, we pro-
fane God's holy name in, and by our prayers ; for
we look not upon God, as one that can hear, but as
an idol, and pray to him, as we we would do to a
stock, or as heathens do to their dumb, deaf and dead
idols : Otherwise our eyes would be fixed on him,
as the eyes of servants are unto the hand of their mas-
ters, or as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her
mistress, as *Psal.* 122. 2. And we would wait for
the Lord, and hope in his word, more than they, that
watch for the morning, *Psal.* 130. 5. 6.

8. Yea, when we look not after our prayers, to
see what answer cometh, we not only take his holy
Name in vain ; but we even mock God to his face,
and affront him, by putting a supplication in before
him, and running away, as if we thought not the an-
swer worth the waiting for. Would not a great per-
son, or judge think himself mocked, if a poor man
having a cause depending before him, should give him

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a bill desiring his cause to be examined and discussed
and in the mean time should go away, and never
once enquire, what is become of his cause?

9. Yea, hereby also, we do a great affront unto
Jesus Christ, the great advocate and intercessor with
the Father; for in prayer, we profess to imploy Christ
as the great intercessor, and put our prayers in his
hand, that he may present them, and procure a good
answer: And when we never look after them, what
an affront do we to him? If a beggar imployed the
king's son to present a petition to his father for
him, and after he had done this, would go away &
never enquire after his petition, to see what the
answer was, would not the king's son think himself
miserably slighted? And if we look not after our
prayers, how can we be thankful, or acknowledge
our obligations to Christ? And how can we be sen-
sible of his special love?

10. We lose hereby many sweet and soul-refresh-
ing experiences of God: As 1st. We lose the proofs
and experiences of his faithfulness, in keeping his
promises, and making good his good word to us *Psal*
143. 1. 2^{dly}. Of his love and tenderness, in having
compassion upon us, and helping us, in our straits.
3^{dly}. Of his constancy and graciousness, who will
not deal with us, according to our folly, nor answer
us according to the wickedness of our hands, nor ac-
cording to the idols of our heart. 4^{thly}. And of his
free grace and condescension, who louts so low as to
take notice of us, unworthy sinners, and to answer
our desires.

11. When we look not after our prayers, to see
what returns we get, we lose the experience of our
selves, which otherwise we might have: If we were
narrowly observing what returns we got, we would
thereby read God's displeasure at us, and our service,
See *Micah*, 3. 5, 6, 7. Or well-pleasedness with us
and with what we do, through Jesus Christ, *1/ai*. 58
9. When he hid his face from us, or shut out our
prayers.

prayers, we would find ourselves called to enquire after our prayers, to search and examine them, both as to the matter, and as to the manner of performance; and to mourn over the sin of our holy things: We would find our selves called likewise, to search after the provoking and procuring causes, of his hiding of his face; and thus would we be kepted from the plague of deadness and security.

12. When we look not after our prayers, we lose much comfort, that we might meet with upon the account that God's hearing our prayers, saith, That That he is reconciled to us, in Jesus Christ; that in him, he accepteth of us, and of our service, that tho' he be in heaven, yet he hath regard to poor indigent sinners, on earth, & taketh notice of their case and heareth their desires: All which, and the like cannot but yeeld matter of comfort unto the honest heart. So likewise we lose the sight of that ground of thanksgiving and praise, which otherwise we might have, and of new and fresh engaging our selves unto the Lord, to be his, and to love and serve him.

As to the next particular, the duty of looking after our prayers, or of waiting for a return: in order to the discovery of what it is, or of what it includeth; let us take notice of these particulars.

1. Where the heart is looking for an answer, there will be faith, relying upon him; the soul will conclude, That an answer is coming; because God is faithful and true, and upon this the soul relyeth and confideth, *Psal, 85. 8. I will hear, (said the Psalmist) what God the Lord will speak:* There he was looking for an answer; but what ground stood he on? or what was his soul doing? He was perswading himself of a good return; for he addeth, *For he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints?* He was sure, a good, full and satisfying answer, would come.

2. Upon this confidence, there is a resting in hope according to *Psal. 38. 15. For in thee, O Lord, do*

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I hope, thou wilt hear O Lord, my God. So as discouragements will not make them faint and give over, whether the discouragements be moved from the consideration of their own unworthiness, or of the evil manner of discharging the duty, or the like; for notwithstanding hereof, there will be an hoping in his mercy and grace, through Jesus Christ.

3. There will also be a patient waiting at God's door, until a return come *Micah. 7. 7. Therefore I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.*

4. There will be a careful observing of the least dawning of mercy or, appearance of the Lord's granting what was asked; as a beggar standing at the door, and seeking an alms, will observe carefully, when any are coming at the door to open it, that they may be ready to receive the alms, they are seeking.

5. When the soul is looking out for an answer, there will be a welcoming, with all thankfulness, the smallest mercy, that cometh from his hand, and an embracing of it, as ardes of more; the day of small things will not be despised.

6. There will be also a care to keep from such sins as may provoke the Lord, to deny or withhold the blessing, that is asked; as also a care to keep their souls in frame, for receiving and improving aright, and to spiritual advantage, the asked blessings, when they are given: And moreover there will be a diligence in the use of all other allowed and commanded means, for the attaining of the good things sought for. And where this care is not, there is no ground to imagine, That persons are looking for an answer of their prayers.

C H A P. XXVI.

How Returns of Prayer may be observed, and improved aright.

ANother Use may be made of this comfortable and useful point of truth, That there is an answer awaiting the prayers of God's people, that are put up to him in Christ's Name, is, That hence the Lord's people, may see themselves called, after prayer, to observe what returns God giveth to their prayers; and next to make a right improvement of these returns.

1. If it be enquired, how shall we know, if we get an answer of our prayers? I *Answer*, Some time the answer will speak for itself, when the very particular, which was asked, is granted, and that so manifestly and sensibly, as there is no place for doubting left; as when *David* prayed for deliverance from his enemies, and he was delivered out of their hands, & brought out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, & had his feet set upon a rock & his goings established, *Psal* 124. 12. Then had he an answer, with a witness: so when *Jonah* after his prayer, was delivered out of the belly of the fish, and set on dry land: And when *Hezekiah*, as an answer of his prayer, was restored to health again, and delivered from the jaws of death. Some times, I grant it is more dark, as when the mercy that was sought by prayer, was a spiritual mercy, as growth in grace, victory over some sin and temptation, pardon of particular failings, & the like: Here the Lord may give an answer, and that answer not be observed; because it may be something equivalent, or better, but not the very particular it self; as we see in *Paul*. 2 *Cor*, 12. He was not delivered from the messenger of satan, which he was asking;

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yet he got confirming and strengthening grace to support him under the temptation. Sometimes the particular may be granted, and yet the same may ly unobserved, through clouds covering the soul; or the Lord's thinking good to hide the mercy from their eyes, of purpose to keep them humble, and to hold them fast at the duty of prayer. And sometimes the Lord may give something in hand, till the full return come: And if this were observed the soul might infer therefrom, That the prayer, that was put up, was not rejected, or cast-by without an answer.

2. It is to be enquired, how it shall be known that a return of prayer is had, when the particular is not granted, which was asked? I answer, this was in part spoken to before: And it may satisfie here to say, That this may be understood, by his granting the great end, which was intended and designed by the person, asking that particular, another way, or by granting of some other particular: As when he gave grace to *Paul* to stand, and withstand the messenger of Satan, that was sent to buffet him, The main thing which *Paul* designed, *viz.* being kept from sin, was attained, by the Lord's granting him his grace to enable and support him, tho' that particular was not granted. So when the believer is seeking the subduing of some corruption, to the end, he may advance in holiness; if the Lord order matters so, as he is made to ly humble before the Lord, and to walk with him in all humility, the end is attained, tho' the particular is not granted, and so it may be said, in other like cases.

3. If it be enquired, How it shall be known, That our prayers are a granting; or what can we look upon, as sufficient ground, whence to infer, That our prayers are accepted, and we may conclude, that our desires are heard, tho we have not yet got what we were praying for, I Answer, 1st. If the Lord grant inward calmness of mind, and quiet of heart, after much disquieting trouble, before, and in prayer;
and

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 and thereby make the soul sit down, as filled with contentment and satisfaction, in hope: As when *Hannah* went her way, and her countenance was changed, and no more sad, as it was before, 1 *Sam.* 1. 18. 2dly. If the Lord doth inwardly by his spirit signifie to the believer, that his prayer is heard, and shall be granted in due time; by clearing up the promise and strengthening his faith thereupon: As he did to *David* (as would appear) *Psal.* 6. 8. 9. He was in a sad and disconsolate condition, having his soul vexed, yea, sore vexed, and being weary with groaning, and thereby making his bed to swim all night, and watering his couch with tears, and withal having his eye consumed because of grief; and yet on a sudden, we hear him crying out *ver.* 8. 9. immediately thereafter, *depart from me all ye workers of iniquity, for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping: The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer.* 3dly. If the Lord help the believer to eye him by faith, and to grip him, as his God, and thereupon to pray; he may infer, That a good answer shall come, whereupon he may be quiet, as *David*, *Psal.* 3. eyed the Lord, as a shield about him, as his glory, and the litter-up of his head, *V* 3. And then he cried unto the Lord with his voice, and he concluded, he was heard: And therefore he laid himself down and slept, and would not be afraid of ten thousands of the people, *ver.* 4, 5, 6. 4thly. If in the mean time the Lord determine the heart to a patient waiting, then there is an answer coming, as *Psal.* 40 1. *I waited patiently, saith David, for the Lord; And what came of this? He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, &c ver.* 2. 5thly. If the heart be so fixed, on the suit, that no discouragement will put them off, but rather strengthen their suits; As, in the *Canaanitish* woman.

4. If it be again enquired when we may in faith conclude, That our prayers are, or shall be answered

ed? I answer, When we find our selves in that frame that the promise of that necessary blessing is specifically made unto: That is if the praying person be a true believer; for the promise is properly made to them; as if he hath prayed in faith, in the Name of Jesus, and is waiting in faith and patience for the return, and is not by his sin and folly marring the blessing, or neglecting any mean appointed for obtaining of that mercy. So several good things are promised unto persons, so and so disposed and qualified; as pardon to such, as pardon others; Now when a believer is seeking pardon, and findeth this frame of heart in himself, a readiness and willingness to forgive others; he may expect through Christ the pardon of his sins.

5. If it be enquired, How shall we know that the particular, which we asked, is given in love and favour; and as a return of prayer? I answer. When
 1st. It speaketh for itself, in respect of God's timeing of it; as when the Lord granted to instantly the thing which *Abraham's* servant was asking of him; & when *Peter* was delivered out of prison, and presented safe into the hands of such, as were praying for him, *Act. 12.*
 2^{dly}. When the mercy is begun to be given upon prayer, and prayer, as it were carrieth it on to a perfection. 3^{dly}. When the Lord giveth more than was asked, or something more with it; as when he gave *Solomon* much riches and glory, together with the excellency of wisdom, which he asked. 4^{thly}. When it cometh laden with love, in regard of the timeing of it; as when the person is in best case to welcome the mercy, and to make a good use of it. 5^{thly}. When the heart is engaged more to love the Lord, upon the account thereof, as *Psal. 116. 1.* and to pay the vows made, *Psal. 66. 13, 14, 15.* compared with *ver. 17. 18. 19.* And to glorifie him, *Psal 50. 15.* 6^{thly}. When the mercy hath a peculiar sweetness and satisfying relish with it; so that when he desire cometh, it is as a tree of life, *Prov. 13. 12.*
 t full

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full of sap, and refreshing sweetness; and is not accompanied with that bitterness, inward discontentment & dissatisfaction, that when it is given in wrath, it will be accompanied with.

In order to the second thing, here proposed to be spoken to, that it may be cleared, *viz.* How the Lord's answers given to our prayers, ought to be improved? To which I shall answer briefly in these particulars.

1. Then is an answer rightly improved, when the thoughts thereof do encourage to seek to him again, in new straits, and impress in us a fixed resolution to renew our suits unto him; for this is pleasing to him, and his mercies prepare the way for more, & are arles of more: And so should they be improved. This use did *David* frequently make of such Favours, *Psal.* 120. 1. 2. *In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me.* And what doth he with that favour, when a new difficulty cometh, he is encouraged thereby to go to God again: and therefore he addeth, *Deliver my soul, O Lord from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue.* So *Psal.* 116, 2. *Because he hath inclined his ear unto me; therefore will I call upon him, so long as I live.*

2. Our returns are not rightly improved, when thereby we get not an impression of God's excellency and transcendent glory, as being the only God, worthy to be prayed unto, When *David* saw by faith, that God would answer him, *Psal.* 36. 6, 7. saying, *Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer, and attend to the voice of my supplication. In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee; for thou wilt answer me.* Then he breaketh out in high thoughts and expressions of God, as the only non-such God, *ver.* 8. *Among the god's none like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any works like unto thy works:* See 2 *Chron.* 33. 13.

3. Our returns are rightly improved, when our hearts are thereby engaged the more to lay out our
selves

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 selves for him, and his glory, and to be inclined with
 cheerfulness to serve him : As we see in *Jacob. Gen*
35. 3. And let us arise and go up to Bethel, and I will
make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the
day of my distress, and was with me in the day of my dis-
tress, and was with me in the way, which I went.
 This was also *David's* purpose and resolution, upon
 the account of the return of prayer, which he got, *Psal*
138. 2. I will worship towards thy holy temple, and
praise thy Name, for thy loving kindness, and for thy
truth, &c. And what let him on to this? see *ver.*
3. In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me, and
strengthenedst me with strength in my soul, See 2 Chron
34. 27. 29. &c.

4. Our returns are rightly improven, when our
 hearts are thereby engaged to love the Lord: And we
 are so taken with his expressions of kindness, in hear-
 ing of our suits, that we would fain have others en-
 gaged also, to love him upon the same account, *Psal.*
116. 1, I love the Lord, (said David) because he hath
heard my voice, and my supplication. So *Psal. 34. 4.*
He had said, I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and
delivered me from all my fears: And then among o-
 ther things, he draweth this inference there from,
ver, 8. O taste and see that the Lord is good, &c So
Psal. 31. 22. 23.

5. Likewise, the returns we get of prayer, are
 rightly improven, when our hearts are engaged to
 praise his Name, and to set him on high, that Hea-
 lone may be exalted, *Psal. 66.* When *David* had
 said, *ver. 19 Verily God hath heard me, he hath at-*
tended to the voice of my prayer; with the same breath
 he addeth, *ver. 20. Blessed be God, who hath not*
turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me. So
Psal. 118, 21. I will praise thee. for thou hast heard
me, and art become my salvation: So *Psal 28. 6.*
Blessed be the Lord because he hath heard the voice of my
supplication. So *Psal, 34. 3. 4. O magnifie the Lord*
with me, and let us exalt his Name together: And
 why?

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why? *I sought the Lord, and he heard me, &c.* He would have all the saints joining with him, in his song See *Psal.* 22. 23, 24.

6. Our answer to prayers are rightly made use of, when our hearts are thereby engaged, to trust in him alone, in all our new straits. So *David Psal.* 118. 5. *I called upon the Lord in distrels, the Lord answered me, in a large place.* And what inferreth he from thence? *ver.* 8. 9. *It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord: than to put confidence in princes.*

7. When our hearts are the more alienated thereby from the wicked, & their wicked courses, then make we a right use of the Lord's answering our prayers; after the example of *David, Psal.* 6. 8. *Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity, for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.*

8. As likewise we make a right use of God's answering our prayers, when that is made a ground of encouragement to us, to pray again, and a ground of hope and confidence to be heard. So the church *Lam.* 3. 55. 56. made this use thereof. *I called upon thy Name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon; thou hast heard my voice, hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry.* So once hearing is laid down for a ground of a second hearing, *Psal.* 10. 17. *Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble, thou wilt prepare their heart; thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:* So *Psal.* 22. 21. *Save me from the lion's mouth, for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorn.*

C H A P. XXVII.

Some further Improvement made of this Truth, particularly enforcing the manner of Prayer.

I N the last place, we shall mention this Use of the point of truth named, *viz.* That the consideration

tion of this, That God will hear and answer the prayers and desires of his people, should mind us of several things, touching the manner of going about the duty of prayer; and should enforce the practice of the duty of prayer, together with several things, requisite as to the manner of going about prayer. As

1. Seeing the Lord hath promised to hear our suits, and to grant what we ask in prayer, we are therefore called to come unto him, and call upon him in faith, believing his word, and resting assured of the truth of his promise: And when we can call to mind no particular promise, in reference to the particular, which we are seeking, we may take this and the like general promise in our hand, and go forward with that, that in confidence thereof we may approach and believing the same, expect a good and seasonable return.

2. Seeing so great and rich love appeareth, in casting the door of grace so far open to all that will come and in making them, as it were, masters of all the riches thereof, by promising them whatever they ask; we ought certainly to approach not only sensible of, and suitably affected with this wonderful love and condescension; but with a warmed heart, and an heart in love with God, who dealeth so lovingly and kindly with them: Seeing God's bosom standeth so wide open in love to receive them, and his heart ready to give them all they ask; how should their hearts come in love to be ready to receive, and to ask in love?

3. Doth the promise lye so open, that they shall have all, that they ask? How should this animate and encourage them to seek great things of God? even the kingdom of God and his righteousness, *Mat* 6, 33. the one thing necessary, *Luke*. 10, 42. *Psal*, 27. 4. the face and favour of God, *Psal*. 105. 4. and himself; seeing such as seek him, shall find him, *2 Chron*. 15. 2. *Jerem*, 29, 13. *Isai*, 45. 19. *Prov*. 8, 17. They shall not be confounded, *Psal*, 69 6. but

but their hearts shall live, *verse*, 32. and they shall rejoice, *Psal.* 70. 4. We could be so wise for our selves, in things of a world; and why will we not do so, in matters of everlasting moment? Shall all the riches of heaven be, as it were, at our will; And shall we satisfie our selves with low; base, and carnal things? What a base and carnal spirit will this evidence? It is true, we are to seek the least things also from God; for we are to depend upon him; for all we need, and he will be acknowledged, in the least of our concerns, as well as in the greatest, which is a wonderful proof of his love and condescension: But when the promise lyeth so plain, that whatever we seek, he will grant it. What an undervaluing of the great and incomprehensibly rich things of God must it be, for us to sit down satisfied with dirt and draff, and a swines portion, when kingdoms and crowns are to be had, for the seeking?

4. The consideration of this promise should stirr us up, to make much of prayer, and to go about it as our trade and constant work, seeing it is such an enriching occupation: What more enriching exercise, than to ask and have; not to the half of God's kingdom, but to the whole of it, yea, to himself, and all that he is and hath, so far as they are capable, and in case to enjoy? What merchant would not constantly trade there, where he knew he would have to rich gain, with no lots or no hazard? Who would not turn beggars, if by begging they knew they would come to possess kingdoms, and diadems? How great then must our sin be, who will not follow this enriching trade of prayer, when by it we have ground to expect all things, that we would have, or can desire, that our case calleth for? How should this keep us always at our knees, in a praying posture, seeing there is nothing that he will refuse to give us, except what would do us harm, and be to our prejudice.

5. This should make us continue instant in prayer.

er, *Luke*, 18, 1. *Col.* 4. 12. *Rom.* 12. 12. and to pray without ceasing, 1 *Thes.* 5, 17. never to give over this trade and exercise: Have we a promise, that we shall have what we ask? and should we not, in the faith thereof, make all our requests known to the Lord, and continue instant, standing at his door, believing him to be faithful, and in confidence of his true and faithful word, renew our suits, and wait without fainting, or wearying for a return? For he will make good his word. If any had this ground of confidence in dealing with a king, how little would they weary of on-waiting? If soldiers had assurance of victory, how little would they regard disappointments at first? How freshly would they renew their charges and on-sets? How would this encourage them to stand, as a brazen wall, against the assaults of the enemy? And will not God's promise to us, that we shall come speed at length, and have all our asking, animate us to constancy in this exercise, and to a continuing instant in this duty, night and day, and never to give it over?

6. If this were believed, that we should have what we ask, we would become, in an holy manner, importunate in our suit, and labour fervently and earnestly therein, *Col.* 4. 12. No *Nay-say*, or delay would put us off, and cause us despond and give over; but we would renew our desires, again and again, as we see *Paul* did thrice, 2 *Cor.* 12. and the woman of *Canaan*, *Matth.* 15. No discouragement would ding us back. We see how *Jacob* wrestled, *Gen.* 32, 26. &c. and *Moses*, *Exod.* 32. 11, 12, 13. We would press through all difficulties, that stood in our way: The faith of obtaining at length what we asked, would make us resolute in our desires, and to resolve never to give over, till, according to his faithful promise, we had what we asked.

7. The faith of this should and would make us hearty and earnest in our prayers, and to pray with our whole heart, *Psal.* 119. 145. Did we believe

to obtain our asking, we would not be so careless, dead and indifferent in our prayers ; for this oft proceedeth from our doubting whether we shall be the better, or not, and from fear that all our labour shall be in vain. But were we confident of the truth of this, and fixed in the faith thereof, that our desires would be granted how hearty, and how cheerful, would we be in this exercise ? How free of anxious doubting, sinful fears, faithless questions, & the like, that daule us go heartlessly and discouragedly about the duty ?

8. The faith of this, would make us very submissive, and far from quarreling, when we got not the particular, we were asking : Because we would have good ground to say, He is faithful, and will make good his word : And therefore, if he give not the particular, we are asking, he will hear, for all that, our prayers, and give us what is as good for us, or better, than that which we would have been at. And thus our souls would be satisfied even tho' vve should not obtain vwhat vve vvere seeking : And vve vwould be so far from drawing vwrong conclusions & from saying, That in anger he had refused to grant our petitions ; that vve vwould bleis him upon the account thereof, and acknowledge him to be faithful, true and gracious, even in not answering us, in the particular.

9. The consideration of this should move us to bevvare of drawing sinful conclusions, either from his delaying to answer us, according to our mind, or hiding from us, vwhat returns he is pleased to give ; and vwould help us, to sit down silent, and believe his vvord, and rest thereupon even when dispensati-would seem to say, There is no answer to be expected from the Lord, he vvill not hear : For the faith of his promise vwould secure us, and furnish us vvith matter of a song : For vve vwould then say, Let dispensations and temptations say vwhat they vvill, the Lord is faithful and true, and cannot deny himself

himself: Whatever I be, He is the Lord unchangeable in his being and promises.

10. The faith of this vould help us to pray vvith much submission, and vould keep us far from limiting him, as to the time vvhen, manner hovv, or measure vvherein he should bestovv his favours: The faith of this, that he vvill hear and answer vould satisfie us, and make us say it is enough, that he will answer us, let him take his own time, vvherein to do it, and let him do it, after vvhat manner he seeth best, and dispense his ovvn favours, as he seeth will most contribute to his own glory.

11. The faith of this vould help us to patience in vvaiting for our answer, and keep us from vvearying, or from saying, vvhy should I wait any longer? A proud unbeseeming and atheistical speech, having this at the bottom, That God vvill not be soo good as his vvord: It is in vain to wait for him, or his promise any longer. What profit shall we have by calling on him, and by vvaiting at the posts of his door?

12. The faith of this vould cause us blame our selves for our poverty and leanness; for we vould see, that he is ready to give, if vve vould ask, and that the reason of our not having, is, because vve ask not, or if vve ask, vve ask not aright in faith, & for a right end, *Jam. 4, 2, 3.*

C H A P. XXVIII.

How Christ giveth out the answers of prayers, presented to God.

IN these vvords, I vvill do it, vve told, there vvwere tvvo things included; *First*, that the prayers of the saints, put up in Christ's Name, vould be answered: And of this vve have spoken. *Secondly.*

only. That Christ himself would give out these answers and returns of this we are now to speak, to wit, The way, how these these answers, that the saints get unto their prayers, come unto their hands; now they are effectuated and granted. So that there is more here imported, than if it had been simply said, whatever you shall ask, in my Name, shall be granted: For these words point out moreover, what Christ hath in giving forth these answers.

The scripture gives us an account of several things, that Christ doth in order to the bringing about of the answers, that the saints are to get to their prayers: As,

1. That by his death, merits and blood, he hath purchased all the good things promised, and that we need; for in him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings, *Ephes. 1. 3.*

2. He sendeth the spirit to pen and draw up our applications to us, for such things, as we need and are promised to us, *Rom. 8. 26, 27.*

3. He receiveth our prayers, and puts them in his bosom, that they may be presented before the Father with acceptance, *Rev. 8. 3.*

4. He was constituted and appointed high priest, and now on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens, and as having an unchangeable priesthood liveth for ever to make intercession, for them, and to plead in their behalf, *Heb. 7. 24. 25.* and

5. He is by office become the saints advocate with the Father, to plead their cause, and bring out their answers in point of law and justice, *1 John. 2. 1, 2.*

6. He is now standing and appearing in the presence of God for the saints. *Heb. 9. 24.* and thereby effectually procuring the answer to all their suits; for he is now high in court, and in favour with God, mediator, and so obtaineth upon the ground of his sacrifice and purchase, what he will.

7. He dispatcheth their answer to them, when it is obtained

obtained, and conveyeth it by the spirit, as *Zech.* 14. 15. 16. 17. will inform us; for in the preceeding verse 12. the angel of the new covenant, the mediator interceedeth with the Father in behalf of his people: and *verse.* 13. he getteth a good answer: And here he dispatcheth this answer for the comfort of his people.

Thus we see the answer of his peoples prayer graciously secured, on all hands: But this word, *I will do it*, doth import yet something more, *viz.* That himself will give out the answer, as now intrusted with the great magazine of the purchased mercies and blessings, and as the chief Lord treasurer, having absolute power and authority, to give out, as he seeth good; and so it pointeth forth these things to us *First*, Christ's willingness to answer his peoples prayers and desires; and *Secondly*. Christ's power and ability thereunto.

The *First*, *viz.* Christ's willingness to answer all the prayers of his people, would say these things to us.

1. That Christ Jesus, tho' now exalted to great glory and dignity, and advanced to great honour, yet forgetteth not his poor friends, here behind on earth, He hath them engraven on the palms of his hands, *Isai.* 49, 16. and so cannot forget them, in their wrestling condition. nay he hath them all written on his breast and on his heart, as being the true high priest; as the high priest under the law carried on his breast plate, the names of the tribes engraven, when he entered within the holy of holies, *Exod.* 28. 9. 10. 11. 12. 29.

2. That his love to his followers and members is a strong and unchangeable love. Waters will not quench it, death will not alter it, nor will glory after death make any change in it: For whom he loveth, he loveth to the end, *Job*, 13. 1. We know what love he expressed to his own while he was here on earth; and the same love he keepeth still; change of places
maketh

maketh no change of affections in him; yea his affection rather groweth extensively, since his glorification, than diminisheth.

3. That his care to his members and children, is a constant care, and no less now, when he is in glory than when he was conversant among them, here on earth, in his state of humiliation. Then he was careful to answer all their desires, and petitions; and so is he now; he will hear, and will answer.

4. That he hath the same tender bowels towards them, that he had: His compassions endure, and he is affected with their straits and difficulties; for he keepeth still the heart of a brother to his own; for he is a compassionate high priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and therefore cannot let their prayers fall to the ground: His bowels move towards them, in misery and distress.

5. That he interesteth himself in all their particulars, and taketh notice of all their concerns, knoweth all their straits, and lendeth an ear to all their cries, sighs, and groans.

6. That hence it cometh to pass, That his bodily absence doth not prejudice his people, but their prayers speed no less now, than when he was on earth.

Secondly. His power and ability to answer faith,

1. That he is privy to all their necessities, knowing all their straits, hearing all their sighs; for he is God, as well as man; and therefore there is nothing hid from him, he heareth all their petitions and desires, and knoweth what they would have, and what is best for them: He knoweth all things, *John. 18. 4. and 9. 28. 16. 30.*

2. That he hath all the good things, which they stand in need of in his own hand; and at his disposal: He is master of that treasury, all things, that the Father hath are his, *Joh. 16. 15. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. Joh. 3. 35. All things are delivered of him to the Father, Matth. 11. 27. See also John. 13. 3.*

3. That he hath power and authority, to dispose of these good things, as pleaseth him: For all power in heaven and in earth, is given unto him, *Mat. 28. 19.* The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, *Joh. 5. 22.* And he hath got authority to execute Judgment, *Joh. 5. 27.* He is Lord of all *Act. 10. 36.* Hence he is appointed heir of all things *Heb. 1. 2.* He hath gotten power over all flesh, *Joh. 17. 2.* He is the head of all principalities and power, *Col. 2. 10.* Angels, powers and authorities, are made subject unto him, *1. Pet. 3. 22.*

4. All this power and authority, to dispense of these good things, is given to him, as mediator, and especially, as now having finished the work of redemption, which he got to do, in his state of humiliation, and as being now risen from the dead, and exalted to glory. God, having now highly exalted him, hath given him, a Name, which is above every Name, *Phil. 2. 9.* Having raised him from the dead, he set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name, that is named; and hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the church. *Eph. 1. 20. 21. 22.* And so he hath this as the glorious fruit of his great pains and sufferings, in his state of humiliation.

Whence, we may see our selves called to several duties; As,

1. To wonder at this wonderful condescendence of love, and contrivance of wisdom, in ordering all things thus, so well for the comfort, and stability of his people, and to comply sweetly therewith, seeing it is so much for our joy and consolation, and that upon several accounts: For,

1. May not all such as have fled to this anchor of hope, have strong consolation in this, that he who is their brother, husband, head, advocate, intercessor, is Lord of all that they stand in need of; and hath all these

these good things under his own hand, to give out as he seeth fit.

2. May they not be encouraged under all their pinching straits and difficulties, knowing, That whatever their condition be, there is help for them in this Lord of the dead and of the living ; he who is their dear and only friend, hath all power and authority, & can command help & relief for them, when he will ; he can as supreme Lord, command light, life, strength, victory grace, and all that they would be at ?

3. May they not be encouraged, to cast the whole care and burden of the church, and of themselves in particular, on such an head, who is so careful of his body, and of all the members thereof ; so mindful of them, and so tender of them, and so concerned in all their trials, distresses and calamities ; seeing beside this great and strong affection, which he hath towards them, and compassion and sympathy with them ; He is furnished with all things, that their case can call for ; He is the great dispensator of all the returns of prayer ; and he hath power and authority to give out whatsoever is good for them, as absolute Lord ?

4. May they not hence be encouraged to go to him, with all their desires, and promise themselves a good answer, in due time, seeing he who hath made a door patent to the Father for them, penned their supplications to them, presented them in his censer, interceded for them, and doth stand for them before him, to plead their cause, and bring forth their answer ; hath their answer in his own hand ; and hath power to give it, when and how he will ? What should now make them fear or doubt of a good answer ? They cannot doubt of Christ's love, tenderness, care and faithfulness ; nor have they ground to doubt of his power and ability . How may this answer all difficulties ? And how may it set to prayer, over the belly of many discouragements ?

5. May they not rejoice and be glad of their lot, & say, the lines are fallen to them in pleasant places ;

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seeing they are related to, and interested in such an
head, who can supply all their wants, give them all
their desires, answer all their prayers, do all for
them, that they need according to his riches in glory?

6. May not this be comfortable unto them, to
know, that as all their prayers go through Christ's
hand; so all their returns come through his hand:
As he is the great master of requests; so he is the
great Lord treasurer? And may not this give a pe-
culiar relish unto all their returns, when they may
say, This answer is come from Christ my brother,
my husband, my Lord and my King? May not this
yield a peculiar satisfaction, to see the hand of Christ,
working out every answer, and giving it out of his
rich treasury, by his power and authority?

2. To challenge and rebuke our selves for not be-
lieving nor rightly improving this great ground of
consolation, when the church, or we in particular
are in great straits, enemies are strong, all door of
help, and hope of outgate seemeth shut: For sure,
if this were believed, we would not need to fear, nor
faint.

3. To enforce a suitable heart in us towards Christ,
answerable, in some measure, to his heart towards
us. For,

1. Seeing he now is exalted in glory, and yet can-
not forget us, or our condition; therefore be our con-
dition what it will, we should not forget him. If he
now in glory, hath a good mind of us, let us in earth
have likewise good mind of him, and of all his con-
cerns.

2. As his love continueth towards us, so as change
of place doth not change affection in him: So let
our love continue and grow toward him, however it
be with us, and whatever condition we be into.

3. He hath special care of us, in our various cases
and changes: So let us walk answerably hereunto,
by having a tender care of his glory, of his inter-
ests

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elts in a world, wherein he looketh upon himself as
concerned.

4. Hath he bowels of compassion towards us, in
our affliction and misery: Let us therefore open our
bowels to all his indigent members:

5. Is he interested with all our matters and concerns
and is there any of his matters, that we should not
be interested in? Should not we take a list of them,
as if they were our own?

6. Is he careful to fulfil all our desires, to grant all
our prayers, and to do what we desire him? So let
us be careful to perform all his desires, to answer his
requests; which is to be obedient to his laws, where-
in standeth our own felicity, and everlasting salva-
tion.

C H A P. XXIX.

How God is glorified in Christ answering Prayers.

WE come now unto the *Sixth* particular confi-
derable, viz. The end of this dispensation
of grace, whereby Christ giveth the answers unto the
prayers of the saints, put up in his Name, in these
words, *That the Father may be glorified in the Son:*
And from hence, we may observe something in ge-
neral, and next something in particular.

As for the observations more general, that have
here some ground, we shall name these.

First. That God hath wonderfully interwoven
his own glory with our good, in the contrivance of
salvation, and all the parts thereof, through Jesus
Christ. Hence that solemn song of the angels, at
Christ's nativity. *Luke. 2. 14. Glory to God in the
highest, on earth peace and good will towards men.*
To shew that these were linked together, in the Lord's

wonderful love and condescension. It is said, 2 Cor. 1. 20. That *all the promises of God are in him*, (i. e. Christ) *Yea, and in him Amen, to the glory of God.* And the *fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, are to the praise and glory of God*, Phil. 1. 11. For God doth all things to his own glory, and hath made all things for himself. Prov. 16. 4. As we are predestinated unto the adoption, of children, by Jesus Christ Eph. 1. 5. So he hath made us accepted in the beloved, *to the praise of the glory of his grace.* ver. 6. And he carrieth on the work of grace in souls, that they may be *to the praise of his glory.* ver. 12. O how comfortable should this conjunction be unto us: when he might, had he so pleased, gotten glory to himself in our perpetual condemnation and perdition! How should this make our salvation, and every part thereof, sweet unto us, that it is a salvation, wherein God is exceedingly glorified; and is so contrived, that every piece thereof preacheth forth his glory? Yea, how should this press us to mind our own salvation the more, because God will get so much glory thereby? And what the Lord hath thus graciously conjoined, we should never think to separate, in our endeavours; but join both, and seek both, the one in due subordination to the other; seek our own salvation, that God may be glorified therein.

Secondly. We may hence see, That when the Son is glorified, as mediator, in and by what he doth for saints, the Father is also glorified. Thus the Father is glorified in the Son; and the glorifying of the Son tendeth to the glorifying of the Father, *Joh. 11. 4.* “ This sickness (*said Jesus*) is not unto death, but
 “ for the glory of God: *And how was this?* That
 “ the Son of God might be glorified thereby: So
 “ *Joh. 13, 31.* Now is the Son of man glorified,
 “ and God is glorified in him. Hence that word
 “ *Joh. 5. 22, 23.* The Father hath committed
 “ all judgment unto the Son; that all men should
 “ honour the Son, even as they honour the Fa-
 “ ther

“ther: He that honoureth not the Son,
“honoureth not the Father, that hath sent
“him.” How may we then wonder at this
excellent, wise and well contrived frame? And
how may we wonder at this condescension of love &
free grace; that God should account himself glorified
by what Christ doth for our good; and that Christ’s
glory, as mediator, in working out our satisfaction
and salvation, should be glory unto God the Father?
Again, seeing Christ’s getting glory, in perfecting
our salvation, will be so much the glory of the Fa-
ther; it should perswade us to give Christ much glory,
by putting much work in his hands. And on the
other hand, we should beware of dishonouring the
Son, because this tendeth to the dishonouring of the
Father; and we dishonour the Son, when we give
him not our souls to save, and imploy him not in all
things, that concern our souls; or give the glory of
any thing done, to any below him. Finally, O but
our salvation must be a wonderful glorious piece of
work, that is so much to the glory of both Father
and Son! Is it any wonder, that the angels pry in-
to this mystery of glory? *1 Pet. 1. 12.* Yea, is
it not a wonder, that we have such slender and
common thoughts thereof, and are not transported
with admiration thereat?

Thirdly. We may see, That Christ in all the acts
of his mediatory work, had a special design to glori-
fie his Father: Hence he said, *John. 17, 4. I have*
glorified thee on earth: And now in glory, he is per-
forming the rest of that work, for the glory of the
Father; According to that, *John, 17. 1. Glori-*
fy thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee. Which
should teach us after Christ’s example, to design,
with all singleness, the glory of God, in what we
do, even in working out our own salvation; And
to delight in, and be taken with that salvation, where-
by the Lord was, and is so much glorified.

Next

Next, more particularly, we may from these words observe these things, *First,* That as in all the acts of Christ's mediatory administration, the father was glorified; so likewise, in Christ's effectual answering of the prayers of his people; for thereby is the veracity and goodness of God manifestly seen. Which should teach us firmly to believe, that there is an answer coming to the prayers of the children of God, put up in the Name of Christ, seeing God will not want his glory: As also, to be encouraged to pray much seeing answers will come, and God will be glorified thereby. So this should teach us to improve what answers we get, unto the glory of God, that thereby we may be coworkers with Christ in that matter, and in our places promote his design of glorifying the Father.

Secondly. That the particular manner of answering our prayers by Christ, now glorified and constitute supreme Lord dispensator, is peculiarly and signally contrived for the glory of the Father: For thereby the Father getteth glory on many accounts: For,

1. He getteth the glory of his truth and faithfulness, in keeping his promise, of hearing & answering the prayers of his people.

2. Of his faithfulness, in giving testimony to his Son, as an al sufficient mediator, to whom, we may confidently come, and roll our whole soul upon; as one able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him, *Heb, 7. 25.* Hereby is it manifest that the Father's testimony of Christ was true; for he cannot but be an al sufficient mediator, who hath the whole store-house and magazine of heaven under his hand, and at his disposal, and who hath authority & power to give out thereof, as he seeth good; Now every return of prayer, that Christ giveth, is a new confirmation of this all-fulness of Christ.

3. Of his goodness, in sending, fitting and qualifying such a mediator, one chosen out from among
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the people, *Psal.* 89. 19. One mighty & whom he upholdeth and strengtheneth with his arm, *verse*, 21. Every answer of prayer, that Christ giveth out, preacheth this forth, that he is an allsufficient mediator, thoroughly furnished to perfect their salvation to the glory of the goodnels of God, in providing and preparing such an one.

4. Of his justice likewise: for now Christ being exalted to such dignity, power, and trust, justice must needs have been satisfied by him, so as no more could be asked; and thus God was glorified in him, *John.* 13. 31.

5. Of his graciousness in condescending unto such a satisfying way of answering our prayers, by giving Christ, our mediator, all power to give out our answers: Is not this a lovely desirable way, suitable to our frailty and weakness, when we may go to our brother, high priest, intercessor, husband and advocate, and from him get our answers? Is not this a clear demonstration of his love and gracious condescension of the Father? Thus consulting our good and satisfaction, and contriving the way so, as may yeild us much comfort and encouragement.

6. Of his authority, in sending an authorizing Christ for his work, wherein he was the Father's servant; Hence it is laid, *John*, 5. 23. --- *He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father, which hath sent him.* So that all these returns of prayer, coming through the hands of Christ, confirm Christ's authority, and so tend to the glory of the Father, who hath sent him, and clothed him with that authority and power.

7. Christ hereby is demonstrated to be God, and Lord of the dead, and of the living, having all power in heaven, and in earth, and being appointed heir of all things; and every answer of prayer, being a confirmation hereof to us, should work us up to a confessing of him to be Lord, to the glory of the Father *Phil.* 2, 11.

8. Christ's

8. Christ's power is hereby magnified, and he manifested to be, as his Name is, *Wonderful*; and this is also to the glory of the Father, *Joh, 11. 4.*

All which should cause us wonder, and admire at this singular and rare contrivance of wisdom, wherein so much of God's love, tenderness, compassion: faithfulness, and condescending grace and goodness may be seen, and observed; and concur in carrying on the ends thereof, even the glory of God, in Christ; by receiving and improving all our answers, so as God may be glorified in Christ; and by being satisfied with Christ's answer, both as to matter and manner; Seeing he knoweth best how the Father will be glorified in, and by his answering; and by being submissive unto him, and far from limiting or prescribing to him, upon the same account. This should also move us to mark, and observe this end, in all the Lord's answers; and consider the answers given for this very end, that we may thereby see and observe something of that, which is Christ's end, in granting the answer, *viz.* of God's faithfulness, truth, goodness and condescending grace: And so blame our selves, that do not more consider and mind this way, of glorifying God in his Son.

Thirdly. That Christ's granting the desires and prayers of his people, which are put up in his Name to the end, the Father may be glorified, as it is a great encouragement to pray; so it giveth ground of hope & confidence that our petitions shall be heard, & answered, in due time. This not only may be an use of the foregoing truth, and an inference therefrom; but moreover the scope of the words leadeth thereunto: For Christ is encouraging his disciples, to pray to the Father, and he is assuring them, that their prayers shall come speed; by telling them, that he himself will do what they desire: And for further confirmation hereof, addeth, the end, which he hath before his eyes in granting these desires, *to wit. That the Father may be glorified in the Son.* Wherefore

fore if Christ's answering the desires of his followers, and their prayers put up to God, in his Name, will tend so much to the glory of God, and is done by the Son, on design, that the Father may be glorified in him, Is it not a sure truth, that such prayers shall not want an answer: And that therefore his people may be confident hereof; and in the confidence of this may be encouraged to pray? The ground of this truth lyeth here, that God will not want his glory, and that the son is very tender thereof; And therefore, as for the glory of the Father, he went about all the work of redemption; so he will not fail in this piece of answering the prayers of his people, whereby the father will also be glorified, and he intendeth the glorifying of the Father.

The faith and consideration of this, should be a strong enducement to us, to continue instant in prayer, and wait in faith and hope for a return, seeing here is a sure and fast ground of faith & hope; God will be glorified in Christ, by these answers, & Christ knoweth this, and doth design the glorifying of the Father, in himself thereby: And seeing it is so, what need discourage us, or make us despond, or fear that no return will come? Will not Christ carry on the work, to the glory of his Father? Will he fail in that, and not mind his main design? And withal, seeing it is so, we may hereby stop the mouths of all objections, and wrestle over all discouragements; and continue in hope, waiting for a good issue: And whatever the return be, we should be thankful, and take it well, knowing, that Christ answereth so, as may best contribute to the glorifying of the Father in himself, both as to the matter of the answer, and as to the manner, and time, or season thereof.

C H A P XXX.

What is imported by Christ's repeating the promise.

THE last particular in the Text remaineth to be spoken to, and that is Christ's repeating and ingeminating the promise, *ver, 14. If ye shall ask any thing in my Name, I will do it.* Which beside may be intended to remind them, of the right manner of prayer, in his Name, if they would be sure of an answer; therefore it is here, in the repeating, mentioned Condition-ways; *If ye shall ask any thing in my Name*: From which Words, considered both ways, we shall draw a few Observations, and that briefly, and to close this Matter.

1. It is no easie Matter, to get it believed, that our Prayers will indeed be answered: Therefore is this repetition of the Promise made, to confirm us in the faith of it. Our own unbelieving heart occasioneth this, and satan can make use of many things to raise and foment our misbelieve and doubtings, both from our own unworthiness, the evil way of going about the duty, and our either not observing, or misimproving of former answers, and from other things of that nature.

2. It is no small difficulty to believe, That Christ himself will answer our prayers: for this is also ingeminated, that he will do it: And this may proceed from our ignorance of that noble oeconomy, that is condescended upon by the persons of the trinity, in the work of our redemption; and particularly of the way agreed upon betwixt Jehovah and the mediator, in the covenant of redemption: as also, from the want of the rooted faith of Christ's God-head: or from our ignorance of our interest in him, or from our Jealousie of his love, faithfulness and constancy.

3. Christ is desirous to have his followers believing
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fluredly, That what petitions they put up, in his
Name shall be granted: This is imported by his re-
peating this promise, and inculcating it: For this
being a great proof of the Father's love to them in
him, tendeth to the setting forth of the glory of his
mediation: It hath in it a great ground of comfort;
and Christ would have them rejoicing in him, as be-
ing now high at court for their good: It is likewise
a great incitement and encouragement to pray, and to
continue instant in prayer; whereby Christ getteth
much employment, and this tendeth to his glory.
And it is a great encouragement to wait for an an-
swer, whereby Christ will be also glorified and ex-
alted.

4. Christ is desirous to have all his followers firm-
ly believing, That he himself will work out, and
give them all their answers: For he would never
have them questioning his love, power and faithfulness,
whatever change of dispensations they meet with.
This will also contribute to their glorifying of him,
when they look to him, as the great Lord treasurer,
and dispensator of the great promises, and promised
blessings, and cause them look to him, depend on him,
and take all from him. This will also serve much to
comfort them in all their distresses: Seeing hereby
they will perceive that Christ now tho' exalted in
glory, yet hath mind of them, and an heart towards
them, and will do all their business. As also to give
them confidence in all their approaches, and assurance
that their labour shall not be in vain: For at length
he himself will satisfy all their desires, and give a proof
of his faithfulness, to the glory of God. Which
should teach us to wonder at Christ's tenderness, and
care to have it not only well and sure with all his
followers; but also to have them full of faith, com-
fort and joy in them, be their case what it will: As
also: sweetly and willingly to comply with this de-
sire of Christ's, and to give him full faith, that we
may have strong hope and consolation through him.

5. Christ's

5. Christ's repeating this promise, saith, That to doubt of the truth of this, that Christ will effectually answer prayers, put up in his Name, is of great disadvantage to believers: For *1st.* it maketh them weary in their addresses to God by Prayer. *2dly.* it makes them weary of waiting, when they have no hope to be the better. *3dly.* It makes them heartless and disconsolate in sad cases; for now they know not what to do, and the only mean left, that is prayer, is not very promising. *4thly.* It occasioneth a carelessness and indifferency in prayer, & a laying aside of earnestness, importunity & fervency. *5thly.* It layeth the soul open to satan's suggestions, making them to question their interest in Christ; & to his temptations to put them from the duty. *6thly.* It maketh them weak for other duties: For the faith of this is a strengthening encouragement to any other duty. *7thly.* It necessitateth them to dishonour the Lord in not giving credit to his promises, & trusting his faithfulness; and to dishonour Christ, in not believing the worth, the reality & efficacy of his mediation, in not believing his exaltation, & his credit with the Father; in not believing his riches, power and authority: And in not believing the tenor of the covenant of redemption:

6. On the other hand, it saith, That the faith of this is of great advantage: Where it not so, Christ would not thus ingeminate and inculcate it: And its advantage appeareth hence, That *1st.* It keepeth fresh in the soul the faith of Christ's God-head: And this is part of the general scope of these words. *2dly.* It keepeth fresh and lively also, in the soul, the faith of Christ's love, compassionateness, tenderness, and care of them, tho' now absent, as to his bodily presence; which is also a part of the scope here. *3dly.* It oilcth the wheels of the soul, in prayer, and as it encourageth to come, so also to wait and hope for an answer. *4thly.* It addeth a sweet refreshful relish to every mercy, that cometh; when it is received as
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Chap. XXX *What Christ's Repetition importeth.* 30;
out of Christ's hand, answering our prayers. *5thly*. It giveth great encouragement to pray, both for our selves and for the church, be ours or her case what it will be, Christ's having the answer in his own hand, to give out, will make all difficulties and discouragements evanish, when it is believed. *6thly*. It giveth ground of glorying in their God, and of holy boasting over all their enemies; and of a resting satisfied with their lot; as having such an one to be their head, husband and Lord; who hath all the answers of prayers to give out. *7thly*. It giveth ground to be satisfied with all the answers, that come, and to believe That they are all good, because they come all out of Christ's hands; and that they all tend to the glory of God, and to the furthering of their salvation; for this is that which he is intending, and which he is carrying on; who giveth out the promised answers.

But now considering these words, in respect of the change of expression, that is observable in them, and in regard of their being here mentioned, as more clearly holding forth the condition of this promise, of being heard, and answered, *viz. If they ask in Christ's Name.* we may observe,

1st. That the promise of answering of prayers by Christ, is made only to such prayers, as are put up in his Name: He standeth engaged in reference to no other, these being the prayers, that are put in his hand, and that he looketh upon himself (to speak so) as concerned with, that they may be accepted, and receive an answer.

2 Christ's clearing this, and declaring it expressly after he had intimate as much, in the foregoing words saith, That it is useful and necessary for us, to have the knowledge and faith of this truth fixed in our hearts, to the end we may be careful to mind the duty, of putting up our suits in the Name of Christ.

3. It speaketh out the great desire that Christ hath to our making use of him, and of his Name, in our prayers: when he thus in plain terms, and expressly

50 *What Christ's Repetition importeth.* Chap. XXX.
annexeth the promise of being heard, or praying and
asking in his Name.

All which may tell us how to pray if we would
have an answer: And what may be one cause of our
not receiving returns of our prayers; even this, That
we employ not Christ, as we ought, in prayer: And
how we ought to rest in hope, and wait for an an-
swer: When we know how by grace we have been
helped, to put up our petitions in the Name of
Christ.

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